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THE TRIUMPHS OF TIME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"TWO OLD MEN'S TALES."

———" For beauty, wit,
High birth—desert in service—
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and inexorable Time."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE

TRIUMPHS OF TIME.

THE LONG STORY.

PART II.

THE PREVISIONS OF LADY EVELYN.

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PART II.

CHAPTER I.

CLARINDA.

THE next morning found Gerald installed in the spacious and beautiful library of which he was to be the keeper; and, so far as appearances went, the sole proprietor and possessor.

He had breakfasted in no very agreeable company. Lord Glenmore breakfasted in his own study—the ladies in their private apartments—Lord Canham with his tutor, in his own dressing-room—so Mr. Green and the chaplain and librarian were all that were left to keep each other company — with the under-governess, Miss Hughes, who sat at the head of the table, and made tea.

A little homely sort of parlour was allot-

ted to these gentlemen for breakfast and supper — when they chose to take any — no one supping with the family unless by special invitation—and here Miss Hughes dined alone, she not being admitted to the honours of the dinner-table.

When Gerald entered, he found Miss Hughes, a very vulgar-looking, and rather pretty, black-eyed young woman, coquettishly attired, and full of all sorts of low affectations, pouring out the tea; while by her sat old Mr. Green, in his spectacles; poring over his Tournefort; and with a heap of wild flowers between the pages. Miss Hughes was saying—

"What a mess you *do* make, Mr. Green, upon the breakfast-table, with all those nasty flowers—I cannot think, for my part, what pleasure on earth there can be in pore—pore—pore—poring your very eyes out, over a set of filthy, odious weeds— . . . I vow I can find as good in any hedge-bank any day."

"Well, miss,"—said the gentle old man, "to be sure I have no right to bring such things to your breakfast-table, — but really, now, you should not talk of things you don't understand — and as to weeds, I don't well know what is meant by weeds— . . . The low-

liest herb and flower is the work of *His* wonderful hand, and breathes the heavenly air, and sips the morning dew, as well as the lordliest."

"And, miss," looking from her to the plant he held, "if you would trace the wonders of *His* hand, in the minute fructification of this little homely flower, you would find cause to marvel,—and to thank Him—who clothed the grass of the field with wonder and with beauty.—Look at this minute and insignificant flower.—To you it seems a little yellow ball; you tread it down unobserving—yet is it composed of several small, yet perfect flowers, all possessing their own symmetrical and appropriate parts—. . . . We call it papilionaceous, or butterfly, from its singular form—. . . . There be of this a numerous family of plants which the illustrious Tournefort—. . . . But mark, what I was just then examining—its seed-pod, or legume—if so it should be called—though legume is not a precise and just term for this singular and well-closed little chest, or rather box—in which the seed, nature's treasure, is enclosed—. . . . Look, miss! can your artful fingers, think you, invent a little elastic purse like this, and hooked so secure, with

opposite little hooks locking close into one another?—. . . . Only look, miss."

"La! what wonders, to be sure!—Why, it's a bit of common yellow trefoil—the food of every cow in the parish, I'll be bound. La! Mr. Green, what an oddity you are!"

The old man laid down his trefoil; and sat rebuked and silent.

"There's your tea for you, good man—come, eat your breakfast for once; and have done with your idle fancies."

Gerald had during this time taken his seat at the breakfast-table; and when Miss Hughes looked that way, the delightful vision of a remarkably handsome, elegant-looking young man met her enchanted eyes.

"Dear me, sir!—I did not expect the honour of your company; this table seldom has the pleasure of receiving gentlemen guests, not belonging to the family.—Pray, sir, what will you take, tea, cocoa,—cold meat on the sideboard?"

"I am the librarian, madam—and I will take a little tea, if you please," said Gerald, helping himself to some very thick, slovenly, cold toast, which stood before him.

"Dear me, really!—In the place of Mr.

Reynolds!—Oh, that's quite another thing—One of *us!*—Well, I am sure, sir, I am very happy to welcome you among us.—Mr. Reynolds *was* a great loss, and Mr. Powel never breakfasts here, so I really am quite forlorn now I have lost my *beau;*—but I expect you, sir, to be very gallant—I am sure you look so—I always exact attention from the gentlemen; don't I, Mr. Green?"

"Eh!" said Mr. Green.—"Yes, my dear, very much."

"Very much!—la! how droll you are! Never mind him,—Mr., Mr.,—I beg pardon, your name is—?"

"James, madam."

"Well, never mind the poor old soul; he's half-crazed with his florical passion, as I call it; he! he!—Oh! don't look as if I were saying anything rude—he's as absent as a bear, and as deaf as my grandmother, in general.—Now, did you—there's a good man tell us—did you hear a word that we were saying?"

"No, miss, I really beg your pardon," said he, looking up in a hurried, uncomfortable manner. "I was thinking of something else. Oh, my dear young gentleman, how do you do?"

Gerald stretched out his hand to the withered little bunch of dry bones extended to him.

"A fine morning, sir!—By what I see lying before you, you have been out collecting early."

"Ay, ay, young man—I love to go forth betimes.—Right against the eastern gate—Where the great sun begins his state—Robed in gold and silver dight—. . . . The clouds in—. . . . Ay, ay, I forgot,—but he is a rare poet that—. . . . That 's what I call a true poet—. . . . He loved to be out when the dew was lying heavy on the grass—and the flowers were spreading forth their sweet savours to the Lord—. . . . And the birds! —The lark that springing up to heaven's gate, sings.—Ay, ay!—. . . ."

And he resumed his breakfast.

"Did you ever!—"

significantly looked Miss Hughes at her new acquaintance; but Gerald gave no sign of sympathy. He got up, seated himself by Mr. Green, and began to talk to him of the wonders of that creation of which he was so wrapt and enthusiastic an adorer.

The chaplain now tumbled in. He seemed half-asleep, his hair in disorder, his beard un-

shaved, his knee-strings untied, his shoes down at the heels.

"How do, gentlemen? How do, my pretty Miss Hughes?—Why, what a breakfast we have got here!—Toast!—I wouldn't give it to the hounds; cold meat and cold scrag of mutton!—Do you call that cold meat, sir?" said he to the boy who came in with a fresh supply of rough, ill done toast.

"Yes, sir," said the boy saucily; "It 's such as the housekeeper says was for this room; if you don't like it—"

"Parley with me, rascal?—Come near me, if you dare; but I advise you take care of your ears. Take that," throwing a piece of toast at his head, "for your manners; and carry that scrag of mutton down to Madame Wilson; and tell her—Mr. Bourne begs her pardon—but if she thinks one of his cloth is to breakfast on cold mutton—she knows nothing at all of her place, or what 's due to people; and beg she 'll send me something eatable—The cold eel pie will do, for I am hungry—and if my lord hears of this, she 'll hear of it—Do you mind, sirrah?"

"Yes, sir, please your reverence," and the boy sneaked away.

"I'm sure, Mr. Bourne, if it was not for

you we should get shamefully treated at this table," said Miss Hughes — "nobody minds me the least bit in the world—I 'm glad you gave him a piece of the toast," laughing—"but, Mr. Bourne is so queer!"—in a confidential under-tone to Gerald.

The young man's handsome features spoke all the disgust he felt.

Poor old Mr. Green never looked up from his book till silence was restored—he then swallowed the remainder of his tea, and rose to go.

"Have you done, sir?" said Gerald, rising at the same time—"Then we will go to the library together."

"La! what a hurry you'r in, Mr.—Mr.—Johns—James.—I beg your pardon—all very well for Mr. Green—he's a *feelosipher*—he, he—but, heaven preserve us—I hope you'r not a *feelosipher*—you don't really—he! he—look like it—dear me—why, Mr. Reynolds was anything but a *feelosipher*—nay, really I can't allow gentlemen to leave *my* breakfast-table in this ungallant manner—I really can't.—Hey, day—well I declare! He's gone!—did you ever see such a boor in all your born days, Mr. Bourne?"

"I think we are quite as well by our-

selves, Miss Hughes," said the chaplain. "Wherever you are there is company enough for me—so let us eat our cold eel pie—here it comes — in peace together, and here is a nice buttered muffin—that's my boy—there, set it down, and make me a little hot fresh tea, if you please—you know I like it just taken fresh off the leaves."

Gerald and Mr. Green pursued their way together. "This is too abominable," said Gerald, who had not yet made the slightest advance in the art of concealing his thoughts.

"Yes, my dear young gentleman, it's very —very disagreeable—but it can't be helped —one must bear the little crosses of our weary, weary, way," said he, sighing. "Peace, sweet, sweet peace!—But we shall have it in a few minutes — you in your library, I in my museum—we must bear what we must bear."

"But I don't see why we need bear all this," said Gerald—"you are an early riser, sir, you say, and so am I; let us agree to breakfast together before these people come —A crust of bread and a cup of milk will do for us, and we can leave Miss Hughes to make tea for the chaplain."

"I should like it very much," said the old man, "but I am afraid she would make a noise about it—and, dear-a-me, young gentleman—a woman's tongue!—. . . . I often have thought that the snaked lashes of the Furies must have typified the tongue—wounding in so many ways at once—. . . So, perhaps, we had better let it be."

"Oh, never mind her tongue, sir.—We will take care to have done and be off before she comes down;—and once safe in your museum, she won't get at you for the whole day."

"Very true;—and I wonder I never thought of that before.—But, my dear young gentleman, this old blood seems frozen—and this poor little withered heart has lost its enterprise. We are poor creatures, sir—poor withered leaves—hanging on a winter tree—every blast blows through us, and shakes us about just as it will—till it shakes us off at last. We have not the young, fresh, moistening sap springing through our veins—. . . . Ay, ay,—right, my good young gentleman—. . . . let us have a bit of dry bread in peace together."

And so it was resolved—but, low and insolent, and depraved as too many servants

in this large, ill-regulated household were, there was not one of them that did not love and pity Mr. Green. His childlike innocence, his unpresuming temper, his age, his helplessness—and the insolent treatment he too often met with, spoke to all their hearts. There were no dry crusts or cold sour milk for his breakfast. He was carefully and plentifully served — with respectful affection and tenderness; and Gerald as well, whose quiet deportment and good looks, were not lost upon the inmates of the servants' hall.

"I don't know, nor I don't care," one of the footmen remarked, "where that chap comes from—but, to my mind, he's a real gentleman—for he always comes down to breakfast in clean linen and he never says a saucy word."

"—And now, sir," said the Earl, (he sat in his large arm-chair, in all his velvet coat importance)—"with respect to the education of the children—. . . . The march of mind has led us far,—and women are no longer condemned to the state of ignorance, once their portion — . . . . Beside those accomplishments which Madame Fonteverault, assisted by Miss Hughes — a most accomplished player

on the harpsichord—and what not—can communicate—. . . It is my wish that my daughters should share the benefit of the more enlarged education usually given to men.—For this purpose I introduced Madame Fonteverault to Mr. Reynolds, and they together arranged—. . . . Madame Fonteverault is a *very* clever person, as you will find—they arranged a systematic course of reading, which my daughters were pursuing, when that most ill-advised young man—. . . . he was a fanatic for Franklin —— I am of a liberal turn myself—but not to that absurd degree—. . . . where was I?—Well, sir, I will desire Madame Fonteverault to have the goodness to step down here this morning, and I will make you acquainted with one another, and leave you together.—May I trouble you to ring that bell, sir?"—and turning to a footman who entered, "Make my compliments to Madame Fonteverault, and request her company in my study when it may suit her convenience—and—stay, stay—What are you in such a d—d hurry for? Tell Fenton I am coming in a moment; and to have the basins and plenty of warm rain-water—*rain*-water, mind—and all my things ready. I shall be coming in a moment.

Bid him—. . . . Can't you stay till you have heard me out?—Bid him let the shells be till I come."

"Yes, my lord!"

With the dignity of a Maintenon, a character she, in her own opinion, much resembled,—and whose destiny, if she had not feared the sharp eyes of the Countess, she would very gladly have essayed to follow, as far at least as the Earl was concerned; Madame Fonteverault entered the room.

Early as was the hour, she was in full dress,—her hair high powdered, and a small cap at the top of it—a rich brocade gown—lace apron and ruffles, and a large fan in her hand. She made a dignified and low curtsy to the Earl, a grave salute to Mr. James, who rose at her entrance, and then, at the motion of the Earl, sat down.

"Mr. James, Madame Fonteverault," said the Earl.

Another stiff bow.

"I begged the honour of your company," said the Earl, whose chameleon nature reflected peculiar dignity from the neighbourhood of the dignified lady. "I begged the honour of your company, madame — that I might have the honour to introduce

you to Mr. James — the son of a great friend of the late Lady Evelyn Brudenel: a young man, in whose favour she has left—poor thing—a testimony . . . . in short, my dear madam, my poor sister had a very high opinion of this young gentleman's accomplishments; and, as Reynolds is gone, I offered him the place of librarian—and so I don't see why he should not read with the children, as Mr. Reynolds used to do."

"As your lordship pleases."—

"Well, I do please—and I asked you to come down, and settle all about it, for I'm rather in a hurry to be gone.—To tell truth, Fenton and I have a deal to do this morning, and it is of great importance that some boxes should be unpacked. I would not have them unpacked except in my presence for the world—so settle all these matters just as you think best; but I am most anxious upon the subject—that is all I can say—. . . . that my children should receive an enlightened education, and profit—. . . . however, I've done —. . . . I must be off. — I leave it all to you."

The lady bowed as ceremoniously to all this—bent down to the man of the white apron—as respectfully as she had done to the

Earl in velvet; and he hurried, in no very dignified manner, out of the room.

"Thank the deuce," said he, as he entered his snuggery, where Fenton was busy preparing all their matters. "Here I am at last.—Off with them; give me my dressing-gown; and now for a treat—now for that box of shells!"—

"—Well sir," began the governess; "may I ask what you propose to begin with?"—

"Propose?" said Gerald, who seemed to possess a treasure of the most imperturbable sangfroid; the inestimable gift of a sound, manly, straightforward education. "I must first, if you will have the goodness to inform me, be made a little acquainted with what has already been done—and at what point I shall find my pupils arrived—I can then decide upon the direction of our future course."

"Why—as to that, sir—they had read a good deal with Mr. Reynolds, and I usually sedulously attended;—Sometimes, however, my place was supplied by Miss Hughes. They likewise studied botany with Mr. Green, a pursuit which the letters of Rousseau have lately brought into vogue. I confess, for my part, these studies appear to me some-

what—. . . . However, sir, these matters the Earl is pleased to take out of my hands—. . . so, if you will propose the course of study you mean to pursue, I will give my opinion as to its being eligible or not."

"Really, Madame Fonteverault," said Gerald, with a little dry smile, "I profess to be still quite in the dark, as to what the young ladies have been doing—or are about to do."

"These studies were always pursued in the library," was the answer; "and it will be better to adjourn there—I will send to Miss Hughes, and desire her to attend the young ladies down—. . . . A little examination of their proficiency on your part, will be better than taking the account from my lips. Be so good, sir, as to ring that bell—Sir, desire Miss Hughes,"—to a footman,—"to ask the Countess of Lodore if she will have the condescension to descend into the library, by desire of the Earl, her father—and tell Miss Hughes to bring Lady Clarinda down.—Now, sir, to the library, if you please."

She seated herself at the head of the library table; by which Gerald remained standing till the door opened, and the young ladies, followed by Miss Hughes, appeared.

CHAPTER II.

The Countess came in first, in an elegant morning dress, looking extremely beautiful; her fine, blooming complexion and large, clear eyes—her erect, elastic walk and gesture testifying to the health, spirit, and activity of her physical frame. She bowed gracefully, with a sort of dignified hauteur to Gerald, whose eyes were almost dazzled as she entered the room, and placed herself exactly opposite to him. After her came the Lady Clarinda,—her hair more out of order than was usual in those days of precision; a certain air of neglect about her person. One could not exactly tell where to find fault, or who to find fault with, but it was evident, that either the young lady herself, or those about her, were strangely negligent in these respects; a beautiful, little dog, fastened by a long, blue riband to her girdle, trotted cheerfully into the room after her; but she herself looked pale, worried,

cross, and uncomfortable; made a shy, awkward curtsy on entering the room, and advanced in a cold, indifferent manner.

"What a way of coming into a chamber," muttered Madame Fonterevault; "and what a figure!—Dear Miss Hughes, only look at the Lady Clarinda's hair!"

"Indeed, ma'am," answered the governess pertly enough, "I can do nothing with the Lady Clarinda's hair, if she pleases to be too impatient to sit still; and is always scolding, and fretting while she 's being done."

The young lady made no reply to this accusation, except by the slightest possible putting up of the lip; and was proceeding to place herself at the lower end of the table, where Gerald stood with his books before him, when—

"No, you are not going to place yourself *there*, Lady Clarinda,"—said Madame sharply. "Please to put a chair on the other side mine, sir," to a footman who attended to place chairs for the young ladies.

"You do not expect to sit *there* again, I suppose,"—to the young lady, who crimsoned up to the eyes, but still said nothing; and sat down where she was bid.

Gerald seated himself with the dignity of

a tutor, which, if he were to be invested with the office, he was resolved to maintain. If he were to teach, teach he would—if these young creatures were in any way to be committed to his charge, he would acquit himself to his best ability of the task; and, young as he was, he would at once assume the authority necessary to the part he was expected to play. He turned himself, therefore, gravely to the young Countess, and though somewhat dazzled by the most beautiful eyes in the world, which were now bent full upon his face, with a mingled expression of curiosity and expectation—and though his voice in a slight degree trembled—struggling for the composure of a philosopher, he began:

"Your ladyship will first have the goodness to tell me, what course of study you have been pursuing, and what books you have been reading—we will then attempt a little recapitulation of the lessons under Mr. Reynolds, which will enable me to judge what may still be necessary for their completion."

"We had been reading history, sir, with the assistance of maps—and we read aloud select passages from the poets—and by Mr.

Reynolds' desire, we had made some attempts at composition."

"What books has your ladyship read upon these subjects?"

"We were going through the history of England, translated from the French of M. Rapin.—We had arrived at the latter part of the reign of Charles I.—and we had read several of Shakspeare's plays."

"And the Lady Clarinda," turning to her, "what has she been doing?"

"She read with her sister, sir," said Madame, replying for her, as usual. "It could hardly be expected that Mr. Reynolds should find the time to give her instruction by herself.—I don't know whether she has profited greatly by the pains taken with her—but we must not expect the talents of the Countess."

The girl raised her eyes from the table, cast a quick glance at the speaker, while a sly, sarcastic smile passed over her features—then dropped her eyelids and said not a word.

"I may conclude, then," said Gerald, again pointedly addressing himself to her, and resolved, if possible, to make her speak for herself, "that the Lady Clarinda will continue to study with her sister."

"As you please, sir"—muttered she coldly, with her head turned away to look after her little dog, who was gnawing his ribbon behind her chair.

"If you please, sir," said Madame.

"We will begin, then, to-day, by pursuing our studies in Rapin; but there is a new work just published on English history by a Scotchman, a Mr. Hume. It is, or ought to be, in the library; if not there, I shall order it.—The genius of the writer, and the elegance of his style, will please you, young ladies, more, I believe, than this solid, sensible, but for your years, somewhat too prolix a writer. In a few days we shall have the book."

He now began to examine the Countess upon what she had been reading. The young lady, who had been silently perusing the face of her very handsome tutor, apparently found something there not absolutely displeasing to her. She relaxed a good deal from the haughty distance usual in her demeanour to her inferiors, and in a sweet, clear, musical voice, gave such answers as she best might to his questions. It would not appear that she had profited much by Mr. Reynolds' lessons, which she had been accustomed to

listen to with a sort of scornful inattention. She required a good deal of prompting, to make out any account at all. But her lips were so beautiful, it was impossible to criticise what passed from them. Gerald was too young to resist the influence of charms so enchanting, and a condescension so bewitching; and seemed hardly to be aware, that the answers were so little satisfactory. He paid her a compliment, very little deserved, upon her accuracy.

Again, the Lady Clarinda's eyes were lifted up—a rapid glance passed from tutor to pupil; her lip was again put up with a contemptuous expression; and then her countenance became passive as before.

It was now her turn. — A brief, clear pointed *résumé* of what she had been reading followed,—shewing that she had very well understood; and very well retained what she had studied.

Gerald's attention was excited. He looked at this pale young girl, whose cold, passionless eyes began to brighten with intelligence as she spoke.

The Countess looked mortified. Madame yawned and said,—

"Well," Lady Clarinda, "surely we have

had enough of all this dismal stuff,—and all these horrid stories. I wonder you can bear to encumber your imagination with all this. The Countess, you see, retains no such worthless matter in her memory.—Her memory is a tablet unspotted, on which nothing is inscribed but what is fair."

The Lady Clarinda closed her lips, stooped down, patted her dog, and said no more.

Some English history was then read, and then some scenes of Shakspeare. They read alternately.

Julius Cæsar was the play in hand. They came to the passage,

> "Good even, Casca—brought you Cæsar home"

Gerald was an excellent reader, and as he read,

> "Are you not moved, when all the sway of earth
> Shakes, like a thing unfirm? Oh! Cicero,
> I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds
> Have rived the knotty oaks; and I have seen
> The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam," &c.

the young girl raised her head, and fixed her eyes upon him, as if fascinated by the mellow voice and admirable reading, which gave the passage in all its force and beauty.

The Countess read Cicero's part:

"Why, saw you anything more wonderful?
"*Casca.*—A common slave (you know him well by sight,)
Held up his left hand,—which did flame and burn
Like twenty torches joined," &c.
"Against the Capitol I met a lion,
Who glared upon me, and went surly by," &c.

Cassius enters; and it was at last the Lady Clarinda's turn.

She began calmly and quietly; but as the scene proceeded her voice became animated, and there was more than common feeling in the force she gave to the passages—till at last, warming, as it were, with the theme, she burst passionately forth with,

"I know where I will wear this dagger then;
Cassius from bondage will deliver Cassius.
Therein, ye Gods, ye make the weak most strong!
Therein, ye Gods! you tyrants do defeat:
Nor stony tower, nor walls of beaten brass,
Nor airless dungeon, nor strong links of iron,
Can be retentive of the strength of spirit;
But life, being weary . . ."

when she was checked with,

"You read like some actress, Lady Clarinda, and not like a young lady *comme il faut;* please to lower your voice a little, and read something softly.—We don't want to hear you declaiming like some play stroller."

Lady Clarinda stopped instantly, and put down the book.

"Well, go on," said Madame.

"Indeed, the Lady Clarinda reads very well," said Gerald.—"Pray proceed.—"

She looked up straight into his face, dropped her arms, looked down again,—but not a word.

Gerald scarcely knew whether to be vexed, or amused.

The Countess looked at her with a sort of haughty displeasure.

Madame said,

"Upon my word, Lady Clarinda; if this be the way you are likely to profit by your lessons, I think we may as well end a scene of *enfantillage*, that is a disgrace to yourself, and disagreeable to me.—When you can govern your temper a little, you shall resume your readings, — . . . for the present, do me the favour to retire with Miss Hughes."

Upon this the young lady arose, and without curtsying, or taking the slightest notice of any one present, walked straight out of the room — shaking the blue ribbon, and looking at her little dog, which trotted demurely after her.

Miss Hughes followed.

The Governess lifted up her eyes, with a

kind of appealing look to the heavens,— the elder sister slightly shrugged her shoulders, but nothing more was said. The reading after this continued for a short time in an uncomfortable manner enough; the Countess then said she was tired, and she and Madame rose, made their curtsies to Mr. James, and, quitting the library, ascended to their own apartments.

This business completed, it was now Lord Canham's turn to appear. — He came in, yawning and stretching; and flinging himself into an arm chair, began kicking about a pen, which had fallen upon the floor.

Gerald seated himself, and began.

But the boy never lifted up his head.

"When I can have the honour of your Lordship's attention . . ."

"Get on—I'm listening."—

But Gerald stopped short.

Upon which the boy raised his head, and looked him steadily in the face for a second or two. He then drew his chair to the table, and placing his head upon his two hands, looked again steadily at his tutor.

"Well, sir?—" he said.

"Lord Canham," said young James, "let

us understand one another at once— . . . Am I to instruct you, or am I not?"—

"You're to teach me what you can,"—said the boy.

"What I *can!*"

"Yes, what you *can.*—I suppose you know about as much as the others."

"Whatever I may know," said Gerald, "of this I feel no doubt—that I know enough to be useful to a boy of your age."

"Of my age, indeed!—Why, do you suppose I have never learned anything till you pleased to come into the house?"—

"I dare say you may have learnt a good deal; but of this I am certain, that you have much more left to learn."

"What do you know about that?—What have I left to learn?"

"Good manners, for one thing,"—said Gerald.

"Well said!"—said the boy, starting up, "I like you for that.—Then, you don't intend to flatter me, as all the rest of them do, till I am sick?—I think I shall like you, after all. Come, open your books, Monsieur Tutor, and let us see what you are made of."

The books were opened, and Gerald was quite astonished at the boy's deficiency.

He seemed to know nothing—Of the very first rudiments of the Latin language he possessed so confused a notion, that it amounted to no notion at all; and yet he was reading a difficult Latin author.

They began to construe; at the third word he stopped short, and looked in his young tutor's face.

"Well, my lord."

"Well, sir—.... Why don't you tell me what it is?"

"Don't you know it?"

"*I* know it," said the boy—"how am *I* likely to know it, or any thing?"—said he, in a bitter tone. "I know nothing about all this deuced stuff, and I am sick of parrot's lessons—Yet this is a fine fellow here—I sometimes pick out a line or two that pleases me well enough."

"Look into the lexicon," said Gerald, "and find the word."

"Look into the lexicon?" said he; "what nonsense!—Tell me the word, and let's get on, for I'm getting tired, and I want to know what it's all about, and have done."

"No,"—said James; "if you choose to learn with me, you must do as I desire you —... Parse that word for me."

"I shan't," said the boy. "You may parse it yourself. — Stuff!"

"Such stuff as men of education and gentlemen are made of," said Gerald.

The boy looked sharply at him again.

"Give me the dictionary and the grammar, and let's see what I can make of it."

But he could make nothing of it; on which, growing impatient, he banged the books on the floor, and getting up, strolled to the window. "It's a beautiful day," said he, "and I shall go out."

"Lord Glenmore desired I should read with you one hour every morning,"— said Gerald steadily, "and you have only been half an hour in this room.— . . .

"Your lordship must give me leave to tell you, that what I engaged with my lord, your father, to do, I mean to do—one hour of your time each day is at my disposition, and that hour I shall employ as I judge best— . . . Unless, indeed, you think proper to arrange with your father so as to release me from my engagement."

"*Engagement!*—Pooh, nonsense!—You get your money, and it's all the same to you."

"All the same to me!—What can your lordship mean?— You cannot surely mean

that to a man of honour it is all the same, whether he conscientiously does that which he is paid to do, or whether he does not?"

"Honour among thieves!"—said the boy rudely; "whoever heard of a *tutor's* honour?—Your honour, I fancy, consists in not being found out! and I'll not peach— . . . I'll get out of the window, and my father will never be the wiser."

"You astonish me, Lord Canham!—I saw that you were grossly ignorant of the Latin grammar — I never expected to see you so barbarously ignorant of the laws of truth and honour."

"*Truth and honour!*" replied the boy, "who talks of truth and honour here?—Why, there's Powel — was ever a more ignorant, rascally pretender put about a boy? — Do you call that honour, to profess to teach another what he doesn't know, and never takes the pains to know himself?— . . . A stupid, ignorant ass! Reynolds was better—but such a low, unprincipled fellow!—*Truth and honour,* Mr. Tutor! we are not used to such things in this room."

"The more the pity!" said Gerald, very much moved.

"You feel for me," said the boy, turning

and coming suddenly up to him, "I see you do;—I see you can feel for a boy,—a poor motherless, fatherless, deserted boy, — the most wretched, destitute, mishandled creature, save one, that crawls upon the face of the earth."

"Yes," he went on passionately, "there never was created being so wretched as I! —I have no mother, as other boys have; I have no father; for what is my father to me?—I have no schoolfellows, no friends;— I'm in the hands of a stupid, unprincipled ass of a tutor, and I *was* in the hands of a base, sneaking, cunning villain.—I have nothing on earth to do, and nothing on earth to care for.—I love no breathing thing in the universe but one, ... and she is worse off than myself."

"I cannot wonder at your wretchedness," said Gerald, "when you have nothing to do."

"What should I do?"

"Study—What ought a boy of your age to do?"

"Study!—with that ass? You don't know what a silly, thickheaded, stupid lout he is;— he can do nothing but fawn, and teach me that detestable, sickening chess of his — and

stuff my ears with his impudent flattery—I wish I were dead!"

"And yet, when you come here, you seem ill inclined to do anything."

"How do I know that you are any better than the rest of them?"

"How should you know, till you have tried me?"

"I like your looks now; I did not like them yesterday—you looked like a prig, I thought, in the drawing-room—... Your name is James; — I remember Lady Evelyn telling me of a Mr. James, who she said had conferred upon her the greatest benefit she ever had received in her life—he had taught her to *think*—Were you that man?"

"That man was my father."

"And are you like your father?"

"I wish I dared to say I was."

"Then you honoured your father?"

"Did I honour him?"—his countenance kindling; "he deserved honour—not from his unworthy son alone—but from every living being upon earth."

"He was a good father to you?"

"That he was."—

"I wish I had a father; — I wish I were the poorest ploughboy upon this estate, if I

had but a father. — I once saw a boy come home to his father; . . . he was a poor, shabby-looking, sickly fellow like myself—but when he went home to *his* father, his father put him between his knees and asked him so kindly how his poor head was — and what he had done at his school? 'Got a prize!' said he — and his father—oh, how his eyes glistened! and he blest him. . . . I wish I might go to school, and work for a prize . . . . but if I got one, I've no father would bless *me*."

"You see, my dear Lord Canham," said James, much affected, "that advantages are more equally distributed in this world than some of us, perhaps, imagine. Rank and wealth cannot command all the good things of this life; there is something still left for the poor."

"But your father— . . . . tell me of him— were *you poor?*"

"We were what you would have called *very* poor."

"But you loved and honoured your father, and he loved you?"

"Heartily — both of us."—

"And you think you were what I should have called *very poor*," said the boy with a bitter laugh.

CHAPTER III.

Such was Gerald's introduction to his new duties—such his initiation into the difficult part of private tutor in a nobleman's family. A part at all times difficult to play to the satisfaction of oneself or others; rendered doubly so to young James by the circumstances which surrounded him.

In those days learning was not respected as it is now, especially in so young a man. Old chivalric prejudices still prevailed to a very great degree, and learning in any one, save a churchman, was by too many regarded as a proof of a weak and unmanly spirit. To be learned, was not to be respected as a matter of course; and the reputation of learning was insufficient to rescue a man — who had the misfortune to be poor — from those thousand slights and minor contumelies which vulgar minds are so apt to bestow upon obscurity and dependence. It required much patience, much composure,

much discretion, on the part of our friend to maintain his own dignity, amid the vulgar familiarities of those of whom he was supposed to be the proper associate — to keep himself aloof from the chaplain and the tutor — to receive as became him, the careless condescensions of my Lord — the polite attentions of Madame — and to make his part good in the motley assembly.

Nor was the prospect much more flattering with regard to his pupils. Interested as he had been by Lord Canham, and sincerely desirous as he was to promote his improvement, he found the task almost hopelessly obstructed by the deep, secret distrust which seemed to have taken possession of the boy's mind.

Young as he was, and, as it would appear, naturally of a feeling and generous temper, he seemed to have become the victim of incurable suspicion, and of a misanthropy perfectly frightful at his age; and to have abandoned himself, in utter despair of finding either honour or virtue among those who surrounded him, to the most careless indifference with regard to others; and complete self-indulgence with regard to himself. His sister and the old botanist seemed to form the only

exceptions to these feelings of contempt and apathy.

As regarded the young ladies — the obstinate, rebellious, unmanageable character of Lady Clarinda, appeared to render every attempt at improvement hopeless; and yet there were moments when flashes of intellect, and traits of generous feeling would break, as it were, through that hard, insensible exterior, which she opposed to the petty tyranny by which she was perpetually annoyed.

Her general manner displayed the most stony insensibility and utter indifference to everybody and everything around her; the old botanist and her brother excepted. She seemed passively submissive, and unresistingly obedient to the mandates of Madame; but under all this submission there would be every now and then evidences of a determined and a sarcastic spirit — and there was too much reason to fear, that habits of dissimulation were fast taking root in her young mind.

Yet were there circumstances, from time to time occurring, which led to the suspicion that she had received from nature an affectionate and generous disposition. She never looked at Canham without the softest expression of tenderness beaming from her

eyes; and when she was passing with her governess, in her usual quiet, demure way, if she came near Mr. Green she would look fondly up at him, her little hand would slip out, press his, and then return immediately to its former position; while his eyes would follow her with a deep and melancholy interest, and a "God bless her, poor thing!" would drop from his lips.

The Countess!— . . . . but this chapter was the most unintelligible, insidious, and dangerous of all.

Harassed, irritated, vexed, and disgusted, the affection of the poor, simple-hearted Mr. Green seemed the only refuge where Gerald could find the least comfort; perplexed as he was by all he saw passing around him, so much of which he found it impossible to comprehend or arrange, as it were, in his mind. He had, too, one other solace in the conversation of Mr. Poyntz, who was no unfrequent visitor at the Court; where he seemed loved, or at least respected by all, in spite of the jealous insinuations of the Chaplain to his disadvantage. He was, indeed, an elegant scholar, and a most accomplished man; and he invariably directed much of his attention to Gerald, whose society,

seemed quite a resource to him upon these occasions.

Mr. Poyntz had also known something of his father in former days; and the sweet savour of that father's virtues imbalmed and invested as it were to his imagination the son. He had at first taken an interest in him for his father's sake; he had now learned to take it for his own.

He saw how irksome, how difficult was the position in which his young friend was placed—he also saw of what immense value such a preceptor and companion might prove to the young people—to the boy, and Lady Clarinda especially; and he was most desirous therefore that the position should be maintained.

They were walking together one evening upon the wide sort of balcony, or rather stone terrace, upon which the front windows of the house opened. This terrace ran along the whole front of the house, raised by a basement story of offices from the ground, as is the case, if I recollect rightly, at Harewood Castle; nay, indeed, I might say, in many of the splendid mansions of our nobility—where it always produces, in my opinion, a very magnificent effect.

The centre was occupied by the lofty doorway to the grand entrance hall; and from it descended two splendid flights of steps, leading *en perron* to the broad carriage-road below. The terrace was continued to a considerable extent on each side, so that the large windows of the drawing-rooms in one wing, and those of the dining and ante-rooms on the other, opening to the floor, entered upon it. It was defended by rich, carved balustrades, and ornamented with vases filled with a profusion of flowers; so closely arranged, that they had all the effect of mosaic or porcelain,—interspersed, as they were, with pots of gathered flowers, arranged *à la jardinière.*

The view from this terrace was truly noble—the eye passing over a rich, narrow strip of French garden and the broad, gravel carriage-road — was carried over a swelling lawn of green English turf, to a fine, winding, artificial lake; clear as gelid crystal—on which floated a few water-lilies—and on which the swan rested; reflecting in that beautiful, cool water his whole figure—"both swan and shadow,"—as described by Wordsworth, who notes every lovely object in nature. Numerous other water fowl, of

different hues and forms, peopled this winding water — overhung and shaded by pendant groups of trees—tall and majestic elms, chesnuts, and beeches, light bending willows, fairy acacias, &c. Some small islands, covered with soft and varied tufts of green, rested too upon this living mirror, giving an infinite beauty and variety to the flickering effects of light and shade of sun and sky.

Beyond the lake, the park spread over swelling hills, intersected with the noble woods, and peopled with immense herds of deer. It was a glorious picture—a truly English picture—type of that ancient English nobility, to a member of which it belonged—which though at times, as in this case, obscured by the weakness and errors of some unworthy members — has always appeared to me, take it all in all, as the finest form of human society that has yet appeared in the world.

Gerald, perplexing and irritating as was his position, was not insensible to the influence of these scenes. His sense of beauty was exquisite; his enthusiasm for nature that of a man of the finest taste; and his pleasure in the noble pictures which surrounded him, proved some compensation for other things.

He was walking with Mr. Poyntz, upon this terrace, one evening.—It was, indeed, their common after-dinner stroll, for, stepping through different windows, when the company rose from table, they were almost sure soon to find themselves there side by side. Something very particularly unpleasant had occurred that afternoon, and Gerald had looked, as he felt, as if he was beginning to find these annoyances insupportable. The two friends began at first by talking upon general matters of taste and literature, as was their custom; but insensibly, they slided, as men will do, into a subject, occupying at that time both their thoughts; and the possibility of long enduring a state of dependence was discussed.

It is perhaps rather surprising that they fell into speaking of a matter almost personal to one of them—for both the speakers were men of much refinement and delicacy—but so it happened this evening.

And after some discourse upon what had occurred in the afternoon, Mr. Poyntz continued to speak, rather as if he were meditating aloud, than addressing his musing companion:

"Yes—the situation must be a painful,

must be a difficult one,— . . . . it is so contradictory.—It brings into the closest and most obvious relations two incompatible claims. The position is radically false.—It is the old fable— . . . Pegasus in the dray-cart—or, my foot my master, or, what not.—

That mental superiority is the only true genuine superiority — a superiority which, wherever one man is brought into relation with another, must, and will be felt—whether acknowledged or not—is a truth of every day experience. All other superiorities we may call superiorities of expediency . . . instituted by society for its own benefit — Diffused as these are amid the world in general, this opposition between the gifts of nature and fortune is useful, and harmonizes well enough —brought into such close contrast, it will not do— . . . it is too glaring.—

" The man whom nature formed to rule, subservient—The accidental lording it over the real— . . . the weak over the powerful — the position is false and perhaps untenable!"

" I make no pretensions such as these," said Gerald.

" You have not the pretension nor the presumption, I know very well, that I am

perhaps shewing at this moment," said Mr. Poyntz, "for I am tempted very strongly to advise one who perhaps does not want my advising at all.—Yet, as it is my vocation to preach to men, I do not see why I should not preach to you.—I am a finger-post maker, and am always setting up my guides to the right hand or to the left. I don't suppose any one much heeds my notices.—Probably any I should elevate in your path, you might tell me you were very well able to set up for yourself."

"Whatever I may set up for myself," said Gerald, "I shall at least like to read yours To speak frankly, I am come to a turn on the road. What occurred to-day has made me hesitate which line I should take—I would fain read your finger-post."

"Straightforward," said the rector.

"What! in spite of all?—"

"Yes."

"And let me, then, ask you, how you would lay down for yourself a plan?—How, in this scene of contradiction and confusion, can any one propose to himself a plan, consistent in itself—consistent with what a man owes to himself, and with what he owes to others?—How, in short, shape any purpose in such

a strange scene, (I speak in strict confidence) as that in which I find myself?"

"It is very easy to idealise, and very difficult to realise, a course.—Shall I give you my idea of a Grandison tutor—my model man?"

"I am all attention."

"The first thing at which a man must aim, who means to walk well, must be to walk alone, hey?—The first aim of a private tutor, should be independence—the first aim of every dependent should be independence."

"Pardon me; but this very ambition seems to me to lie at the bottom of all that strife and vexation, which in ordinary cases perplexes such relations."

"And pardon me—.... we are not understanding the same thing by the word independence.—The independence I desire for a man is, that which he may secure for himself in every position of life, by such a mastery of his own whims, feelings, passions, and imaginations, as shall make him independent of the whims, feelings, passions, and imaginations of others."—

It is a mere trueism—an old saw, after all—I don't well conceive why people never

seem to apply it in this relation of life— . . . Why people always appear less reasonable in these circumstances than in any other. The tutor has only to do what we must all of us do, faithfully perform the duties, and cheerfully accept the asperities of his condition—render unto Cæsar what is due unto Cæsar, and to God what is due unto God. It is the same task set for all. Why tutors and governesses find it so difficult to perform, I cannot understand.—. . . "I suspect that they are led too often to indulge in a susceptibility that impairs their comfort, and lowers their own self-respect—they forget how few, alas! are to be found consistent, considerate, polite, and amiable, in any close relation—and are wounded, as if that was peculiarly levelled at them, which merely belongs to our imperfect race.

"A man or woman enters a family, engaging to perform certain duties—let him discharge these duties to the satisfaction of his own conscience; and not trouble himself with requiring more than the remuneration he has agreed upon; learn to live to himself, and be independent and happy. Consideration and respect he may obtain or not; but so

long as the general forms of politeness are observed, let him teach himself to look upon all the rest as a trifle below his regard. Simplicity, my good friend—a cheerful simplicity of aim—that is the grand thing in life."

"And then," after a pause, pursued he, "how noble the aim!—faithfully to perform a duty and to execute a purpose, in spite of the obstructions, disgusts, and aversions, that surround us— . . . . those persecuting voices, which would fain have diverted the courageous aspirant from the pursuit of the glorious magic tree!—How noble a purpose to educate a child!—Good God! What a task!—To educate—in other words, to save, two such children as these!"

"You are persuading, not reasoning, Mr. Poyntz," said Gerald. "That you wish me to continue here, I see.—You are not convincing me that I *can*; — . . . but of this you have convinced me — that the reasons which made me first accept this employment, ought not so soon to give way before the, perhaps, idle vexations which disgust me. I see what you intend to convey, and I thank you.—I do not think that I am apt to be susceptible, or exacting, or anything much of that sort, but we

are all more or less so at my age.—You would have me more of a man about these matters; I understand you, and I thank you.—"

"These young people," said the good Rector, "engage me more than I can express.—I do not very well know why I take such a peculiar interest in that young girl; nor why I take so much pains to penetrate behind the strange, odd, and evidently unnatural placidity, which she seems to affect.—My exertions to enter into communication with this imprisoned spirit have been crowned with ill-success enough; but you are admitted within the magic circle; —it may be in your power to save a human soul from perishing,—a fellow-creature from despair."

As Gerald was about to reply, the window of the saloon was thrown open, and the two sisters appeared upon the terrace.

The Countess was looking supremely lovely, and was talking with Sir Charles in a lounging, indolent manner; he gave her a somewhat forced attention, while his eyes were continually glancing back upon her sister, who followed demurely, attended, as usual, by the little dog; and holding the blue riband in her hand.

She did not look up at either of the gentlemen as she passed, nor at the glorious scene now glittering in the setting sun, which was spread before her; she seemed absorbed in thought—but her countenance was so devoid of expression, that it was difficult to say, whether she was full of melancholy thoughts, or merely dull and stupid, from having no thoughts at all.

She followed her sister in this mechanical manner — the beautiful little creature, its long curled ears almost sweeping the ground, and its little body almost buried in waves of silken black hair, trotting gravely by the side of its mistress. — She now and then pulled the riband with a sort of affectionate fondness, as the little animal from time to time attempted to stray from her side.

The elder sister turned in her walk unexpectedly, at some remark of her companion; the dog was at this moment running forward, the riband entangled her feet, she tripped, stumbled, and nearly fell — the dog yelled.

The young lady recovered herself with a, "Good gracious! Clarinda,—I wish you would keep your horrid little dog to your-

self.—I wonder how you can think of bringing him upon the terrace!—Nasty, yelping thing! he is enough to drive one distracted! —How I do hate dogs!"

The girl stooped down, lifted up the little offender in her arms,—bent her head over him, and turned herself to the wall.

"Well, you need not cry," said the sister, perceiving the eyes of all the gentlemen fixed upon her.—"La! there is nothing so desperately cruel, I suppose, in not loving a spaniel!"—and with a haughty laugh she re-entered the saloon.

The Lady Clarinda was now examining the dog's foot. Mr. Poyntz went up to her.

"Is your little pet hurt, Lady Clarinda?"

"He has hurt his foot— . . . . He has excessively hurt his foot."—

The tears stood in her eyes, but did not fall.

"He has broken his foot!!!"—. . .

In an accent of despair.

"No, I hope not," said the kind Rector, who had sympathy even with little girls' distresses about their dogs. "Let me examine into the matter,—I am an excellent dog doctor."

He sat down, and began to examine the

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paw, the gentlemen standing round. Lady Clarinda, with her eyes intently fixed upon him, did not perceive that Sir Charles had come up to her, and was gazing intently at her while she was occupied with the dog;—she raised her eye, looked in his face, gave a sort of repulsive shrug with her shoulders;—he laughed slightly, and stood a little further off; while she kneeled down, and busied herself with holding the struggling and whining little animal.

"Lady Clarinda!—Lady Clarinda!"—said a sharp voice. "I protest," cried Madame, swimming forward, "there she is—in the midst of a crowd of gentlemen, busied about that nasty dog, like any *stabel* boy!—... Really, Lady Clarinda," stepping forward and seizing her wrist, "really, when her elder sister enter the house—a young lady of any delicacy or propriety, would, I should conceive, follow.—But we are, I suppose, not to expect such things at present from the Lady Clarinda.—The company of the gentlemen ....."

Clarinda rose immediately, crimsoning scarlet.—Mr. Poyntz rose too.

"Here is your little favourite, Lady Clarinda," said he; "there is no bone broken."

She was taking it in her arms—

"Shall I never cure you of that disgusting trick?—Put him down directly," said Madame.

"I shan't," said she, sulkily; "the dog 's hurt," and shaking off Madame, roughly enough, who followed scolding, she walked into the saloon.

Sir Charles followed her with his eyes,—then began to whistle, and walking to the end of the balcony, sat down, leaned his two arms upon the balustrade, his chin upon his two arms—gave a desperate yawn or two, and seemed inclined to go to sleep.

Gerald remained pondering upon the scene—grieved to see anything so lovely as the Countess under an aspect so thoroughly disagreeable; wounded and indignant for the younger sister.

Mr. Poyntz, who was well used to such scenes, renewed his walk by his side.

"You see all this?"—he said.

"I do; and deeply deplore it."

"It is indeed to be deplored—It is indeed a miserable sight, to see a delicate, generous, and feeling heart, fast hardening into obstinate insensibility.—It is ten thousand pities!—That poor young creature will be utterly

ruined.—How dreadful! How mysterious! when misery tends to destroy, instead of to purify the moral being!— . . . . It is indeed the saddest spectacle in this sad world. But you must not let this be, Mr. James—"

"*I!*—Not let this be?—. . . What a strange task for me!" said Gerald; "a man— . . . . scarcely a man!—a youth!— . . . . not half a dozen years older than herself—The presumption, the impossibility of interference . . . ."

"We must do the best we can, in this world.—You are her tutor, and as such, you may—give me leave to say you ought—to endeavour to open and direct her mind.—Teach her to be at one with herself.—There is something of the heroic in that young heart. Teach her true heroism.—Unfold in her the noble moral character, which I am certain she possesses.—Inspire her with high and pure motives;—teach her the *courage of patience*—to resist from motives of duty and conscience, not from temper or caprice —to be gentle, yet brave—to have a Spartan endurance, with a Spartan energy of self-defence— . . . Poor thing! if I read her destiny aright, she will have need of it all."—

There was a pause of some minutes; then Gerald said, somewhat bitterly,

"I am ashamed of myself, sir—I am ashamed to seem to require so much prompting, in a path I ought to have adopted from the first—I see it now—I see what it is my duty to attempt, at least. I am ashamed of the indifference with which I have regarded so serious a duty—of the disappointment and discouragement into which I have suffered myself to fall. I thank you very much, sir, for this conversation. *I* shall at least be the better for it— . . . It shall not be my fault, if others are not so too."

FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM GERALD TO HIS MOTHER.

". . . . I went up into my own room soon after this, dear mother, and began to review my situation, under quite another aspect. . . . I confess the first bitter disappointment of my hopes *had* discouraged me.—

"I want the cheerful firmness of my dear father's character; I cannot, like him, alas! walk forward, simply and directly, to my aim; heedless of all those flattering and clamorous voices, of which Mr. Poyntz spoke.—

"The passions, the imagination—ambition,

sense of the beautiful—and I know not what— . . . sound in my ears; and I have loathed the business I have undertaken—its drudgery—its vexations, its odious dependence.— . . . But I now see all these things differently—I begin to look upon this, as a field of usefulness and duty—I begin to perceive an infinite interest in the task assigned me. Two young creatures, so faulty yet so fair!—That unhappy boy—victim of cynicism and ennui—and at such an age, too! . . . That poor, wayward, susceptible girl!—ignorant of herself, and fighting, darkly and confusedly, amid all her difficulties and irritations!

"Ah, mother! had my father—he who laboured with such success for the Lady Evelyn—had he been in my place—what would he not have found it possible to do for these two beings, standing in far greater peril?

"And is it not contemptible? And ought I not to be despised by you—dear, energetic, bright-souled mother, that I have not seen all this of myself—that I have required another mind to point out, and urge me forward to so obvious a part? . . . .

"Ah, mother! give to your son—the child of a later age, of a different day—the sound-

ness of principle, the directness of purpose, the simplicity of soul, which belonged to his parents!"

He laid down his pen,—for even while he expressed the wish, other visions swam before him;—He remembered a few, low syllables which, in the course of that evening, had fallen from lips, that would have become the honey-breathing Hebe herself.

"I was wrong, perhaps, about the dog..."

He struggled with it, however, and he conquered. He was so young—he was so deeply—so exquisitely susceptible to the beautiful—... but he had been reared by his father, and duty and humanity were all-powerful in his heart. He looked steadily forward to his object, and the vain dreams of imagination faded away.

CHAPTER IV.

So passed some little time.

With Lord Canham Gerald laboured assiduously, and not without fruit. The evident distrust and suspicion, with which the boy had for some time regarded him, began to yield to the efforts of a man, who he found never flattered him. Simple truth; gentle, firm, and unvarying opposition to all that was unwise—determined disapprobation of all that was wrong—and a steady demand of the correct performance of those few literary duties which it fell under his province to superintend . . . . . these won the boy.

His sneering, contemptuous defiance—his cynical, sarcastic suspicion—his insolent negligence—his undisguised fear of being duped, began to give way. Confidence appeared once more to dawn in his young mind: he seemed to be trusting himself to esteem, and to love.

He began to perform his tasks with assiduity and pleasure: at moments he would

seem falling almost into a strain of affectionate unreserve—he would disclose some sentiment of his heart, or speak of some difficulty in conduct—then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, would fix a sharp scrutinising eye upon his tutor's face; and with a short, hard laugh, turn all he had said into ridicule—would rise from his chair, call his dogs, stooping down and caressing them in a manner, which seemed intended to say,—"These are the only honest fellows after all."—

Still there was a progress.

But with the young ladies it was impossible to say, whether any progress whatever was made.

Gerald endeavoured to give their studies as much of a moral and didactic form as possible—but he felt how dry and ineffectual such unvital teaching is: he longed to apply personally the theme he was obliged to treat of generally.

Yet he could not complain altogether of inattentive listeners. The attention of one, at least, seemed captivated by his sweet mellow voice, and feeling, earnest manner. The young Countess sat opposite to him, her beautiful eyes apparently fixed in deep attention; and yet, when questioned as

to the subject matter of her studies, there appeared scarcely any result.

The Lady Clarinda was kept by the jealous care of her governess—who placed herself exactly between them—almost entirely out of his sight; so that it was impossible to address a sentence individually to her; or to judge of the impression he had made, without leaning quite across the table—this at times he did; but the young lady was usually playing with her apron-strings, and seemed very little to heed what was going on: and yet sometimes when Madame, as she was wont to do, interposed in any matter on hand, with a very shallow remark—uttered in a very pedantic, sententious manner—the young lady's quick eye would suddenly glance at her tutor, with a certain malicious intelligence, which he found it somewhat difficult never to return.

But when he was speaking of excellence—and discoursed of the beauty of virtue, and of heroic goodness, — of patient resignation, and of that better nature which exists, though perhaps undisclosed, in the hearts of all mankind—if he could have seen her at such moments, he might almost have seen her heart beat.

Still, there was a temper unsubdued, which under all the artificial tranquillity and submission of her manner, shewed itself in many a sudden outbreak of rebellious bitterness —as suddenly smothered again under the demeanour of a subdued and passive slave.

One day in particular, a little scene occurred, which shocked and grieved our young St. Preux; and made him almost despair of producing any effect, upon the misdirected energies of this unfortunate young creature.

They were assembled as usual, and there had been a good deal of irritating persecution going on, on the part of Madame, who seemed in a mighty ill humour this day.

The Italian compositions were being corrected. The theme was rather an imaginative one, and required a greater originality and range of thought, than any they had as yet attempted.

The Countess had written hers very ill; the faults of idiom and grammar were such as to shew the most negligent inattention; the ideas were trite, shallow, confused, and ill expressed: it was full of faults; and the rapid pen made score after score, obliteration after obliteration; evidently to the great irri-

tation and mortification of the fair pupil and her governess.

When the Lady Clarinda's came to be looked over, Gerald was perfectly astonished at its accuracy and elegance. He turned, and paid her a well-merited compliment upon her attention and proficiency; when Madame, who looked exceedingly vexed, interrupted him with,—

"Oh, sir! you need not be surprised;—the Lady Clarinda studied that subject with *Mr. Reynolds*.—We have too good reason to know, how much interest the Lady Clarinda took—in *all* the teachings of Mr. Reynolds..."

The girl bounded upon her chair as if she had been stung.

"Oh, my foot!"—cried Madame.—"Good Heavens! Lady Clarinda!—your sharp cork heel has crushed my foot to pieces!"

She absolutely writhed with the pain.

"You malicious creature!—You did it on purpose!"—said she angrily.

"For shame! Clarinda,"—said her sister indignantly, "how could you!—I hope, Madame, you are not much hurt?"—for she looked quite sick with pain—"Do, pray, sir," to Gerald, "ring for a glass of water."

"Dear Madame!"—cried Miss Hughes,

running to her; "She will faint!—Open the window—dear Madame!—Which foot?— . . Let me take off your slipper"—trying to dislodge Madame's imprisoned foot from the brocaded slipper into which it was squeezed.

The pain she suffered from having it crushed under Lady Clarinda's heel, when thus pinched up and confined, was really intense; and she could hardly restrain her tears.

Everybody looked shocked, and all were engaged about her, while she applied her smelling-bottle, and made, to say the least—rather more of it, than the occasion required.

Clarinda alone, during this little scene, remained perfectly unmoved, leaning back in her chair, with her arms on her lap, twisting a bit of paper in her fingers; she never even once looked up.

The Countess and Madame exchanged looks.

Gerald could not but feel shocked.

Not one syllable of apology, not one word of regret, did the young lady vouchsafe to express. She continued to twist the paper, while Madame rose; and it being found impossible for her to put her foot to the ground, a footman was summoned to assist in carrying her upstairs.

With mingled exclamations of pain and condolence, and all the ceremony of a serious accident—lifted by the footman—assisted by Miss Hughes—and followed by the Countess, she was helped out of the room; Lady Clarinda following with an air totally unconcerned.

"Was this right, Lady Clarinda?"—said Gerald, as she passed him, where he stood at the door, which he had opened.

She looked in his face, but her countenance gave no answer to the appeal; and the party quitted the room.

Let no person so fortunate as never to have seen a child taken *en grippe*, by an unprincipled parent, nurse, or governess, think this picture overcharged. The biting inuendo, the wearying persecution—the daily and hourly acts of oppression—amounting, too frequently, to positive cruelty — perpetrated without remorse in such cases, constitute one of the most perplexing and distressing pages in the history of human nature. It is, alas! an evil in a greater or less degree, of frequent occurrence, even in this our day; when certainly every form of domestic injustice is very much softened.

The tendency in those who have the care

of children to unjust favouritism and partiality on the one hand, may be understood, and in some slight degree, perhaps, palliated; but this disposition to unreasonable aversion is as unnatural as it is abominable; yet, that it is not very uncommon,—abominable and unnatural as it is—the history of too many school-rooms, and too many nurseries, would but too sadly testify.

The very hearts of parents themselves, I have seen blackened by this hideous tendency.

Let mothers watch over their own feelings in this respect, with a self-correction the most severe .... and let them be especially watchful over the slightest symptom of this most barbarous injustice, in the nurses or governesses to whom their children are committed. Let them distrustfully observe their conduct to the child that is "always naughty!" —that child, perhaps the most innocent, probably the most interesting, certainly the most to be pitied of the flock! That child is altogether misunderstood and mismanaged —or she is the victim of this horrible antipathy. The peril which the future character of the unhappy créature incurs—to say nothing of the total wreck of childish happiness,—is but faintly imaged in this imperfect

picture; . . . a far more impressive hand should take up the subject than that of the writer of this little tale; who even in his own limited experience, has felt his very heart sicken with disgust and terror, at the behaviour, even of parents, under the influence of this dreadful perversion.

CHAPTER V.

It was two days after this last scene in the library had occurred, that Gerald happened to be standing in the conservatory with Mr. Green, who was initiating him into some of the mysteries of the vegetable kingdom.

The old botanist had been absent some time, so that Gerald had been deprived of the only tolerable society he could make for himself in the house. The business upon which Mr. Green had been engaged was one connected with the Earl's passion for collecting natural curiosities. Gerald was delighted to recover the old man.

The conservatory opened out of, and terminated a small drawing-room, in which Lord Canham was sitting; buried in the deep recesses of an arm-chair, and totally absorbed in a book he was reading.

The door opened hastily, and the rush of silks into the room was heard.

"Canham! Canham!"—exclaimed an eager voice; "dearest Canham! where are you?"—

It was the Lady Clarinda. She was in her usual morning dress, her apron on, scarf tied lightly round her neck, and her large gipsy hat in her hand.

"Here!" said the boy.

"Oh, there you are!—Up to the ears in red morocco, and reading; but throw away that abominable book, and say—oh! say—what shall we—shall we do?"—

"Why do you take my book away from me in that hurry, Clarinda?" said he, rather crossly.

"Oh, don't be gruff! you naughty—naughty boy! I am out of my cage, don't you see? I am at liberty for a whole—whole morning!" cried she in a voice of rapture. "Anna is gone out with my father to pay visits—and by good fortune inexpressible—Madame finds her foot so bad that she breakfasts in bed, and lies up—interesting victim, for the whole day;—and so has turned me over to that abominable Hughes; . . . but thank goodness! I can always manage Hughes—I can dispose of *her* at any time; it's only flummering her about Powel, and letting her slip down the back stairs, and out they are for a walk. . . .Madame thinks us safe shut up together, and Hughes is off in a

twinkling. She dare not tell of me, lest I should tell of her—...Oh! I have the lovely Hughes in excellent order! So they are all out of the way, and here am I, free as a bird, for three or four whole hours— . . . So come, come, dearest Canham! Do not let us lose a moment."

"Well," said Canham; "what shall we do?"

"Oh! anything—where are all the dogs? —Let us go and have a famous romp with the darling fellows. Where is Nero?—Where is Pompey? . . . I have not seen their dear, big, surly faces these three weeks. Madame keeps me closer than ever—I have not had a breath of sweet air, or one jump or spring for ages... Oh! let us go into the woods sweet, dear Canham!—let us go through the woods, to the vale of Eden...to that delicious water-fall.—Do! do! dearest Canham; . . . . only look, what a day!—Ah!" flying to Mr. Green, whom she now perceived in the conservatory; "are you come back?—you dear, sweet old man."

Then seeing Gerald following, she stopped, coloured, and made a low curtsy; but recovering her spirits in a moment, she clasped her delicate hands round the old man's arm,

and continued—joy animating every feature:

"And so you are come back safe, my dear friend—my dear old Mr. Green!—And where have you been, and what wonders have you met with?—and how many monsters, and how many bones . . . and how many cracked teapots, and how many rusty nails have you brought back?—Oh, you will tell me about all these wonders in your own good time, won't you?—my dearest Mr. Green!"

"Ay, to be sure, my pretty lady!" pressing her little clasping hands to his side, and looking down with an old man's love,—that love, the sweetest, purest, tenderest, most touching of all loves.—"And how has it been with you whilst I have been away?"

"Bad and bad!—Worse and worse! . . . . Ever since that day, when you spoke for me,—dear good old man—to my father, . . . that abominable, detestable Madame has been worse than ever. I knew it would be so.—I always told you to say nothing.—It 's no use; you should do as I do, crouch, and be silent. . . . . And oh! when you are free,"—springing as if she would spring to the very ceiling, "spread your joyous wings and defy them all!"—

"But what 's the matter with Madame?"

"She is laid up with a bad foot," looking askance at Gerald, and whispering,—"oh! such a bad foot!—How could she get it, do you think?—It 's dreadfully bad, she says; —a sad business, isn't it?"

"And so, dear old man," continued she, "I have nothing on earth to do but chatter to you, and play with Canham—dear fellow! —There he comes with all his dogs.—To the woods!—to the woods!—And if Hughes comes in, trust her for telling this to Madame." . . . .

She sprang out of the conservatory window upon the lawn; and there might be seen brother and sister, with half a dozen dogs, great and small, Lady Clarinda shouting and screaming for joy; while the dogs howled and cried,—and Canham, with whip in hand, vainly essayed to keep matters a little in order.

They soon struck into a walk which led into the woods, and were lost amidst the branches of the trees, now glancing bright under a fine summer sun.

Gerald stood, pensive and grave.—Mr. Green looked at him anxiously and wistfully.

"I am afraid, good young Mr. James, you think all this very wrong,"—said he, timidly.

"Very wrong, indeed I do."—

The old man made no answer, but turned aside to busy himself with a plant that stood in the conservatory beside him; it was bursting into flower; but the rich blossoms and delicate leaves were crushed and drooping, and the branches all twisted and distorted.

The old man was endeavouring to remedy the awkward and unnatural position of the branches, and lifting up the beautiful drooping flowers.; but it would not do.

"Quite spoiled!" said he.—"You see how it is—they have chilled it with the cold, ... and they have cramped it by keeping it in the pits where it had not room to expand.—It is the very luxuriance, you see, good young sir,—its very luxuriance it is which has destroyed it. . . . What a fair tree!—What a promise of fair blossom!—all ruined!" . . . .

After a pause, he continued, as if speaking to himself,—

"No, no! their Creator does not mean it so;—He means that these young and blooming things should wanton in his sweet air—and bathe in his bright sunbeams,—and sport like the creatures of the element, waving

their fair arms to the soft western breeze. . . . . His zephyrs, sir. . . . . He never meant these sweet young things to be shut up in pits, sir."—

Gerald sighed.

It was now some time since he had begun to feel the sincerest pity for the interesting young creature they were both thinking of: deeply had he lamented the life of unnatural privation which she was doomed to endure; far more deeply did he grieve over the effect which it was too plainly beginning to produce upon her heart.

"But, sir," said the old man, "let us go after them.—These poor, careless children will wander so far before they think about it . . . . and my Lord will, maybe, be back,—and he has forbidden her ever to stir without a governess,—and maybe, he will be dreadfully angry, and the fond, thoughtless child will be so scolded. . . . . It 's only being out alone with her poor brother!—but they make a great sin even of that here. . . . . Let us follow them, and persuade her to come back in less than an hour's time.—My Lord may be home again; and that Madame is *so* severe." . . . .

Gerald readily consented, quite as much

concerned and uneasy as the old botanist, though from more mixed motives and feelings.

They followed the path; it led into a sweet copsy wood of oak and mountain ash, honeysuckles and wild roses, all in tangled brakes and thickets; the wild flowers enamelled the ground beneath, the blue sky hung its clear crystal vault above, in which a hawk was at this moment slowly soaring. —It was a bright, beautiful summer day.

They walked some way, for the paths of the wood crossed and intersected each other. At last they came to the head of a little green valley, watered by a stream, which sprang in a natural fountain from a moss-covered rock: the rock was covered with yellow broom, and shaded by a group of noble oak and ash trees. Here they found the children.

The boy was lying listlessly upon the grass, between two enormous dogs, that lay on the turf on either side of him; one arm was thrown over each rough neck, as he lay stretched at full length,—his head cast backwards—gazing upwards into the sky. The girl was hanging among the rocks, half buried in the golden broom and fox-glove —gathering flowers and humming a sweet

low song, in a voice wildly, but deliciously rich and full.

Mr. Green laid his hand on Gerald's arm and arrested his further progress, whispering earnestly—"Let them be a moment; let them be—good Mr. Gerald—poor things! let them be. . . . . See! she is gathering flowers—she loves them, sir—she loves all the beautiful works of *Him*." . . . .

The girl now joined her brother. She had a huge bunch of flowers in her hand, and she sat, or rather half lay down upon the grass,—almost burying herself in the curling white hair of Pompey the Great,—while she examined her nosegay of flowers.

"See, good sir!" whispered the old botanist, excited by the sight, "she is studying them. . . . . She has got one there which she knows nothing about—I must tell her all about it—Shall we discover ourselves to the poor things, sir?"—

And so saying, he tottered forward, followed by Gerald—but they were nearly close upon them before they were perceived by the young wanderers; the boy was in a sort of dreamy dose, and the girl peering into the golden blossom of the broom. "How beautiful it is, Canham—the richest Indian

gold never was so rich as this—what a delicious colour!—and how lovely the thick, wild branches!" — raising her head — she gave a little cry—and then, perceiving who it was that stood nearly close beside her, she sprang eagerly up, crying—

"Dear, dear old Mr. Green, it is only you—Oh, sit down—sit down; such a heavenly day—and look, what a heap of flowers! —sit down here"—tearing off, impetuously, the silk scarf that was tied round her neck, and rumpling it up into a heap—"Here, this will make you a cushion—and do tell me." . . . . But when she saw Gerald she stopped, and looked at him with a certain suspicious enmity—her hands fell, she seemed to forget her flowers, and turned and looked at Canham.

He had turned his eyes, but had not moved—he answered her appeal by—"You need not be afraid of James, Clarinda—he's an honest fellow"—then getting up from between his two dogs, who rose on both sides of him, stretching and pawing with their huge limbs—covered with masses of rich, curling and fringing hair—and shaking their noble heads and long ears—he approached Gerald, and stretching out his hand, said, "You are

a friend, sir. . . . Clarinda,—Gerald James is a true man."—

"I *am* a true man, my Lord, said Gerald—you do me only justice there; but as a true man—" . . . .

"Oh, none of your preaching now, my good fellow," said the boy—"you may preach to me at your leisure—but don't bother Clarinda—she *shall* have her liberty for an hour—and enjoy it too. *I* choose she should, and that's enough for you—and ought to be enough for any of them. . . . . The time may come when that cursed old hag may know this—in the meantime she's laid by the foot for once.—Did you ever hear the fable of the Lion and the Gnat? . . . . James Reynolds taught us that at least—did he not, Clarinda?"

The girl exchanged a meaning and bitter smile.

"It is not my business, perhaps," said Gerald, gravely seating himself upon the grass, where Canham had already resumed his place, now, however, sitting up, but with his arms still twined round his crouching dogs—"It is not my business, certainly, to preach, as your lordship calls it, to the Lady Clarinda— . . . . and yet to one who has

been taught as I have been—there is something in what I have heard and seen this morning, that gives me great pain."

Mr. Green and the Lady Clarinda were sitting close by, but occupied with their flowers — and he was saying —

"And this delicate, twisting, soft thing, ... with its small winged leaves, and its pale green tendrils—and its racemes of white, clustering microscopic flowers—has, after all —see, a fructification resembling unto the butterfly form; . . . . and yet, in the position of its chives, they being not united into one brotherhood, or rather two—it shews, that nature is beginning through this variation, as it were, to link the butterfly to another order. . . . . For nature, Lady Clarinda, worketh not in an abrupt and chance-like manner—She hath a grand, scientific plan, so to speak . . . . we are searching, as it were—not, mark me —to link together an arbitrary arrangement of our own vain invention; but to search out, and to display that system which she hath herself laid down . . . . to unite what appears at first a wild and rich confusion, in her own grand, proportioned unity or whole.—So, as I was pointing out, this little plant . . . . insignificant some might call it, but we will not

call it so, ... for it is a lovely ornament—see where it hangeth in delicate profusion, over the fallen pillar of that lordly pine— . . . . Well, what was I saying—we call it *Fumaria claviculata.*—You will remember the name, ... for names, dry as they are, are the seeds of knowledge—Seeds are dry uninteresting things, but they are the germs of a living harvest. . . . . You will also remember the plant, for *that* is knowledge itself, do you see.—Knowledge imprinted on the pages of the imagination— . . . . that master-faculty which taketh in rich treasures, and hoardeth them in gorgeous picture—thence furnishing forth food, as it were, to the Wisdom . . . . the soul — the hidden thing of God— . . . . the divine part of us, Lady Clarinda."

The girl sat, her eyes fixed upon the old man in mute and breathless attention, as he concluded. . . . . " Yes," — with a sigh, the deep inspiration of one happy and satisfied, was all she said, while she took the pretty plant and examined it attentively.

" — But there is a nobler part still, Lady Clarinda," . . . . Gerald now began. But she did not look at him; she continued to examine her plant.

" . . . . There is yet a nobler part of being

than the divine and godlike reason—There is that within us which draws us yet nearer to the Great Fountain of all things, than even our reason—there is our heart— . . . . there is our moral being. — While we open and strengthen our reasoning powers, shall we neglect our moral being?—Shall we suffer the heart to be tarnished with revenge, or deceit, or —" . . . .

She lifted up her head, looked earnestly at him, and so did Canham.

He went on after a moment's hesitation:

" . . . . Or shall we tempt others to do wrong, and corrupt our own nature, by mingling with the corruptions and abetting the vices of others—to forward our own purposes —however innocent?"

Neither of them spoke a word; but their bright blue eyes, the only thing of colour or animation in their two sickly countenances, were fixed upon him.

" Then you think it was wrong for me to come out here, sir?"—at last said Clarinda.

" I think it wrong by such means," he replied.

She stooped down to take up her gipsy hat, which was thrown upon the grass; and tying it under her chin with one of those

quick, decisive movements, which even in trifles betray the hidden energy of the character. . . . .

"If it *is* wrong, I will go away—I will not do it again"— . . . . but as she spoke, she looked wistfully round her, and her looks seemed to say: "Sweet, lovely, dewy, glittering woods,—sweet flowers,—sweet waters, —how shall I part with you?"

"You are not going, Clarinda,"—said the boy, springing up, and pushing back Gerald, who stood in his way,—"you are not going? —*I* order you to stay.— . . . You are not going to that abominable prison, because James, here, talks like a Methodist.—Sit down by me, and let him take sides with the strongest, if he will. I feel for the weak, ... I abhor tyrants; and by force or fraud —. . . . Hold your tongue, James, I tell you —. . . . I thought you would have been on that side too,"—added he reproachfully.

"Side!' said Gerald;—"who talks of sides?"

"I do,"—said the boy; "for we are split into sides; . . . . on one side there is a careless father, a violent domineering sister; a vile, iron-hearted vain, painted tyrant of a Frenchwoman,—and a vulgar, low, intri-

guing, vicious fool—with a whole mob of corrupt, dastardly flatterers behind them; . . . . on the other, two helpless, innocent children, and a poor helpless old botanist.—I thought you were of a kind to take sides with the weak,—and not to mind your p's and q's, and keep to the strong,—as all the rest do;— . . . . But I did you injustice, Mr. Tutor."

"You did me no injustice, Lord Canham, when you thought that I took the deepest interest in your welfare.—You know that I do not deserve your unjust and passionate accusations . . . . you know I am not of the sort that you describe . . . . But I do not call it shewing interest in any one's welfare, to see them going wrong and not to tell them so.—For myself, Lord Canham, I would rather see you and Lady Clarinda do right, than be happy,—I would rather see you resist the temptations to do wrong, which surround you— . . . . and preserve the nobility and purity of your own hearts—even, than see you happy."—

"Would you?"—said Clarinda, eagerly stepping forward; "then we will.—Yes," cried she, while her countenance kindled, "I understand what you mean:

"'Tis nobler far, yea, nobler to endure than to contest;
That energy—that passive energy—that force subdued,
Compressed around its centre, the great soul,
Feeds, as it were, the spring of moral being.'

"Yes, I see it; I was revengeful to Madame.—I hurt her foot on purpose; but I did not mean to hurt it as I have done. Yet, how I have secretly rejoiced in the pain she has suffered! . . . . And that vile, deceitful Hughes,—I have encouraged her deceit, because while she walks with Powel and lies to Madame, I get away to my Canham—but I thank you, Mr. James; . . . . I see the truth of it; I thank you for telling me the truth. Come, Canham, let us go home."

He said nothing, but rising slowly and sulkily, prepared to follow Lady Clarinda, who walked quickly away.

Poor Mr. Green, as great a sinner as either of the young ones, sighed heavily, and followed after, looking sadly ashamed of himself; while Gerald remained where he was, in bitter regret at the part he had thought it right to assume; in admiration of these two ingenuous natures; in melancholy rumination on their fate, and in vain endeavours to discover some means of remedying the evils under which they suffered. They had not ended here.

CHAPTER VI.

Lady Clarinda, vehement in all her feelings, once awakened to a sense of the contemptible nature of the duplicity which she was practising, adopted, without hesitation, that clear, undisguised mode of action, which was indeed the true characteristic of one, naturally so sincere and truthful as she was.

The timid old botanist, hobbling after her as she walked hastily on, followed by the lagging and lingering Canham, kept puffing and fretting as much as he was ever known to fret; but he could not overtake her.

"Dear Lady Clarinda! do stop one little moment, dear child! . . . . Pray, Lady Clarinda! . . . . I cannot—I am out of breath—"

She stopped, turned round with an impatient gesture, and waited till her old friend, gasping for breath, at last reached the spot where she stood.

"Dear me!—well—oh, my breath! . . . .

But, dear Lady Clarinda, that way leads to the front door—and my lord and your sister, maybe, will be coming back. Come in, dear, my way with my pass-key, ... into the library, and so up your own private stairs, and nobody will be the wiser."

"No," said she, "I shall go in at the front door."

"Nay, but then—lackaday! If my lord should come home, dear child, what a noise Madame . . . . only think, Madame and your sister—and may be . . . . better come in my way."

"He despises deceit and abhors duplicity, —he thinks me mean, cowardly, deceitful,— he shall see that I will be so no more.— . . . . No, I will go in at the front door.—Let father come home; I have disobeyed and deceived him,—he shall see that I will never attempt to deceive him again."

And she continued her impetuous progress. The poor old man looked after her— his dim blue eye filled with a mixture of pity and admiration, following her — as, swiftly, yet with a certain air of generous dignity which was new in her, she threaded the tangled wilderness till she was lost to his sight.

Canham, sulky and unconvinced, came lagging idly along; at times talking to and caressing his dogs,—at others, moodily kicking the pebbles before him; his hands in his pockets, his eyes on the ground.

Clarinda had now reached the gravel road in front of the house, and was slowly ascending the *Perron*, or high flight of stone steps, leading to the grand entrance — when the measured tramp of the four heavy, long-tailed, black horses was heard, and her father's splendid carriage appeared, advancing, at a pretty round pace, up the avenue. Still she might have escaped detection, would she have precipitated her steps but a very little. She did the reverse, —she lingered, and the carriage advanced.

"Who is that standing on the steps?" said the Earl to his daughter.

The Countess looked out of the window for a few moments. — "It is Clarinda, I declare."

"Clarinda! and alone!"—said the Earl, looking displeased. "Very negligent on the part of Madame!"

"Oh, poor Madame— . . . ."

"I thought," said the Earl, beginning to warm, "that since that cursed affair of Rey-

nolds, I had given positive orders to Madame never to allow her to leave the house without her governess. . . . . Very extraordinary all this, in my opinion!"

"Alas! poor Madame!" said the sister, "how can she help it?—She has been confined to the sofa by a hurt Clarinda, *accidentally*, gave her two days ago,—and I'll engage that Clarinda has taken advantage of this to make one of her escapades. . . . ."

"Escapades! — What do you mean? — There was Hughes at least to look after her."

Now what was the feeling—what could be the temptation, which instigated the sister to make the reply she did to this? Sisters do not take sisters *en grippe*: that detestable feeling is an attribute only of those who are exercising legitimate authority. What is it that sets sisters against sisters? Which blackens and corrupts all the tender springs of sisterly love? . . . . Envy and jealousy!—Yes, this beautiful, this rich, this titled young lady, more wicked and more selfish than the rich man in the affecting fable of Scripture, envied the poor Clarinda her sole possession —to her, as that of the poor man's lamb . . . . the love and interest her misfortunes inspired.

—It was wormwood to this haughty and imperious spirit; rendered only the more arrogant by all her gifts, to feel, that by some strange fatality, every one loved the despised Clarinda,—even her very father, with all his severity . . . . loved her, she was persuaded, better than he did herself. There mingled with all this, that unhappy feeling, which too often divides the children of different mothers, with a something almost approaching to hatred. All the vulgar, ill-judged insinuations with which dependants are prone to poison the minds of children under such circumstances, had had their full effect upon the irritable and ill-regulated temper of this haughty young lady.

The mother of Clarinda, a weak woman, had, while she lived, given way, unrestrainedly, to her passionate love for her own children; careless and unobservant of the desolate feelings of the motherless girl. Her little ones had been flattered, caressed, and brought forward,—while the young Countess, with all her numerous, just claims—and her innumerable, arrogated ones,—to notice, had found herself too often overlooked and neglected. This happened, it is true, years ago, and in childhood; but there are charac-

ters to whom revenge seems natural; in whose hearts a wound of this sort never heals, but often rankles and festers for life.

It was all these feelings united in a character, fiery and passionate, yet radically cold, imperious, and overbearing,—one without the slightest notion of the duty of self-examination, or self-restraint — a character which from the proud coldness of her own mother, the careless indolence of her step-mother, and the culpable negligence shewn by the Earl to all his duties—had never received the slightest right direction: it was this terrible darkness and hardness of heart, joined to a secret envy, which produced speeches such as the following, in answer to her father.

"There was Hughes, at least, to attend upon her," said the Earl.

"Depend upon it, my lord, she has learnt to be more than a match for Hughes — and to indulge her love of liberty. . . . . Who her companions are, I can't pretend to say — or where she got her plebeian tastes, — but I hope to goodness we shan't have her marrying the footman."

"Why, what the d—l do you mean?" cried the Earl, kindling.

"Oh, nothing, nothing! — Pray, my lord, don't be so warm."

"But I will be warm—I will be warm.— . . . . I insist upon knowing what you mean."

"Oh, the less said the better," said she, as she stooped down, to arrange the lace of her cloak, which had become entangled in her large green fan.

"The less said is *not* the better—You know something, you suspect something—What do you mean?—I insist upon knowing what you mean."

"Oh, really — but since that affair of Reynold's, one does not know what to think . . . . — only I hope there is no new, low amour upon the carpet."

"Low amour!"—exclaimed the passionate old man, now completely aroused,—"But by all the ——" uttering a horrid imprecation, "curse me, if I do not get that out of her."

The horses stopped, as the Earl furiously banged down the glass—the next moment he was out of the carriage, and stumbling and hurrying, as fast as his gout would permit him, up the *Perron.*

The Countess descended more leisurely, and sauntered up the steps, humming an air; and turning, from time to time, to look at

the beautiful view stretched beneath her feet.—How calm looked that lovely landscape on this summer day—how cool and translucent the peaceful bosom of the waters, which spread in crystal beneath the trees!

Alas! what a contrast to the stormy passions of the violent and undiscerning father, as he panted up the steps, and gained the terrace or balcony above, on which his unhappy daughter was standing—endeavouring to throw up the sash of one of the large windows which led into the saloon!

His temper was not improved by the process of hurrying up the steps, this burning day: he was very hot, and very much out of breath; all which added to the violent irritation with which, seizing her by the arm, he shook the poor young creature roughly, crying out,

"How now, you baggage!—Where have you been, and what are you about—"

The girl coloured, started, looked exceedingly frightened, and continued, with trembling hands, her endeavours to open the window.

"Only, only . . . . . ."

"Only! only!—how now?" . . . . shaking

her again by the arm, which he grasped so roughly that her delicate flesh quivered with pain. "How now!—" his passion increasing with its exercise, "how now!" . . . . shaking her again, "No answer?—Where have you been, and who have you been with?—. . . . I'll have no gadding, I say, as if you were a housemaid seeking her sweetheart—Your sweetheart's gone, thank goodness—and I'd advise you not to be looking for another" . . . .

At this most unjust and undeserved insinuation, the girl coloured furiously, and lifted a rebellious and indignant eye.

"Ay, I know very well what that means—you would disobey me, if you dared—. . . . But mark me well, miss—you are a nasty, impudent, disobedient puss, you are. . . . . I know it; ay, ay, I hear of your tricks—And hark you, miss, did I not forbid you to go out without your governess?—Don't I know you are not to be trusted, you impudent thing, you?—And mind me," shaking her again, "if I catch you out again, I'll punish you . . . . I'll have no footmen loves in my family—I have learnt to take care of that, at least—so let me catch you at such mad tricks again—and if your own room can't hold you, we'll find a cell in

Bedlam shall.—Your dear Reynolds is far enough off, and I 'll . . . . ."

But at this fatal name, as if stung to the very quick, the unhappy young creature struggled violently—wrenched her arm from her father's grasp—and crying out, vehemently,

"I will not live, to be so treated— !" sprang down the other side of the Perron, and flying over the lawn towards the water which lay sleeping in tranquil beauty before her—gave one glance at its sweet, transparent bosom—stretched out her thin, white-wasted arms,—uttered a cry, and flung herself in. . . .

A shout of horror from the Earl made the Countess turn her head; her sister's white dress, like poor Ophelia's, floated one moment upon the water, "but soon the envious flood had sucked it in," and she had disappeared altogether.

The whole had passed so rapidly, that the Countess, who had been looking another way, was not aware of what had happened: and hastening up the steps, she found the Earl aghast and helpless, staring upon the scene below—panting for utterance, pointing and gesticulating with his hands—but unable to articulate a word.

In the meantime, however, two of the footmen, who had lingered in the archway, leading to the stable yard, aroused by that one piercing cry, had rushed out in time to see the white garments sink into the canal; and hurrying to the brink, kept running up and down, and shouting for help; either of them afraid to venture into the water, which was deep in some places.

"Bless you! run for the gardener, Thomas!"

"Bless us! and save us! What's to be done?"

Roused by their cries, several servants came now rushing to the spot; the noise and bustle became universal; but nobody offered any effectual assistance. All was hurry, terror, and confusion; the men running along the side, shouting to one another;—the Earl on the steps, stupified with surprise and horror; his daughter exhausting herself in vain efforts to make the speechless speak, and draw from him what had happened;—when Lord Canham and Gerald were seen slowly turning out of the shrubberies.

"What's the matter?"—said Gerald; "there seems a bustle near the water?"

"Oh, they're washing the dogs,"—said

Canham; and whistling and cracking a little whip, he loitered on towards the house.

A fresh shout, with "Oh, there she is!" made Gerald hurry to the spot.

"What 's the matter?" said he.

"Bless you, sir," said the gardener, "the Lady Clarinda!—She is in the water!—She 's thrown herself in!"

"My God!" cried he; "Where?—Shew me where!"

"I see her, sir; there, down in the hole there—by the sedges.". . . .

"There—there!" cried many voices; but the rippling water deceived them—"There! there!"

Gerald dived in vain.

By this time Canham had lounged down towards the water-side.

"What 's all this deuced fuss about?" said he to a servant.

He turned a face pale with horror. "It 's—it 's—"

"What the deuce! can't you speak?—Is one of the dogs drowned?"

"Lady Clarinda!"—attempting to prevent him advancing.

"Clarinda! Clarinda! What of her?" And tearing rather than forcing his way forwards

through the servants who gathered round him . . . . "Clarinda!—What of Clarinda?—She is not in the water!—She is not! . . . . . Great Heaven of heavens!—Clarinda!". . . .

A shout from the multitude!—he just looked on the water;—he saw something white, dripping, soft, lax;—the limbs, the hair, the dress, all hanging in that shocking, heavy helplessness of a lifeless body taken from the water. He struggled for breath to cry, for strength to rush forwards;—something broke, as it were, within him;—the blood gushed from his mouth and nostrils;—. . . he choked and fell!

At this sight the Earl from above roared aloud, and recovering sense and motion, he, too, hurried down the steps as fast as his unwieldy size would allow; and bursting into a flood of tears, received into his arms the body of his son, which the servants were bearing carefully and tenderly to the house.

How tenderly, how carefully was now the boy, the centre of his hopes and pride, attended!—How many tears washed that pale, inanimate face: order upon order was issued; servant upon servant dispatched for advice—the best advice—any advice!

The boy continued to bleed; he had not fainted, but appeared almost insensible; the

crowd around him pushing and bustling, and stifling all access of air — when Madame, roused by the bustle, and forgetting her foot in the excitement, entered the room.

Madame was no fool; she had seen enough of life, and lived long enough amid the changes and chances of this world, to know pretty well what ought to be done in most emergencies. She had the patient laid upon his bed, cleared the room, opened the windows, and rendered all the necessary services till the medical man should arrive. The blood kept gushing in dark streams from Lord Canham's mouth, but he himself seemed stupified and insensible; and this probably saved his life, for the violent agitation which he must otherwise have endured, would, in all human probability, have killed him in an hour.

As it was, the Earl sat crying at the foot of his bed, Madame at the head, endeavouring to staunch the bleeding; the Countess stood on one side, her eyes fixed upon her brother in mute attention; abundance of attendants in various attitudes, expressive of solicitude not to make a noise—and weariness of constrained silence—might be seen around the walls of the room.—

Clarinda, dragged upon the opposite bank, for to that side the body had drifted, lay upon the grass, the water pouring from the nose and mouth; while Gerald, exhausted by the efforts he had made to raise and drag out the body, had sunk for the moment beside her.

They were alone—yes, strange to say—they were alone.

In the general confusion occasioned by the fall of Lord Canham, what seemed everybody's business was nobody's business. Every one supposed some one was gone to Gerald's assistance; every one crowded after the Earl; she seemed entirely forgotten.

The distress of Gerald when he came to himself is indescribable. Very imperfectly acquainted with what ought to be done to recover the drowned; at a distance from all help, for the bridge was a good way off, and the boat had not been launched, he saw the servants on the opposite bank, following the body of Lord Canham to the house, while he was left totally unassisted;—the poor young girl, all heaped together, as it were, with limbs flaccid and lifeless, lying like a senseless bundle before him.

To throw himself beside her—to raise her head, to lift her in his arms—to totter with his helpless burden towards the bridge, his soul too intent upon its object to feel even indignant at this unnatural desertion:—this he did.

But he could not carry her far; he tottered against a tree, and sank down with his burden in his arms.

Then the thought of this forsaken one—this unfathered orphan—this young girl without sister or friend, without one woman's heart to support—one female hand to aid—abandoned in this her greatest extremity to him a man, and a stranger, pressed upon his mind; and he gushed into a flood of warm tears, which trickled upon her cheeks and forehead. A faint, tremulous beating of the heart,—a sobbing, painful gasping for breath, convulsive twitchings of the limbs—half suffocation, succeeded to suspended animation. All the agonizing struggles of the body returning, as it were, to life, followed.

He remembered that she must have a smelling-bottle in her pocket,—in those days of tight-lacing it was indispensable,—and in searching for it, first be-

came aware of the tightness of her laces. With his penknife he cut and liberated every ligature, and laying her softly on the grass, ran to procure a little water in his watch-case. In this he put a few drops of the strong spirits of perfume, forced it between her lips — she began to heave long-drawn signs, as if the chest was discharging itself from a heavy burden—and opening her eyes, fixed them upon him.

He continued his cares—dropping from time to time a little of the spirit between her lips — composing her drapery round her limbs, but with an instinctive fear to move her till the current of life flowed a little more freely. He felt that motion might extinguish the spark just glimmering into flame. He sat down by her, and holding her hands, gently chafed first one then the other—she gazing, passively upon him—seeming sensible of his presence, but of nothing else; at last she sighed, shivered, and said,

"It is very cold here."—Her lips looked blue.

He took her up again in his arms, shrouded her, all dripping and wet, as well

as he could; she closed her eyes, and in this way they reached the bridge—and the library being the nearest open door, he carried her in there, and up the private stairs to the first room, and the first bed.

Nobody was to be seen; he dared not leave her; he tore with one hand the counterpane away, wrapping her in the blankets, still wet as she was—to all which she submitted, gazing upon him with a calm, dreamy look, while his tears once more flowed over her.

At last she sighed again, and her eyes moved languidly round. "Where am I?" she said, "And what is all this about? It's very cold."—

Gerald now saw the utter necessity of getting help—and hastily leaving her, he ran up the stairs which led to an upper suite of rooms, and there among the garrets was an old crone, a sort of servant's slave, the only person he saw—she was making the chaplain's bed—murmuring and grumbling to herself, for she was a poor, old, half-witted thing, content to be anybody's drudge for a meal.

"Come down here," said Gerald.

"My patience, sir! and be it you—what brings you here?"

"You must come down this instant with me."

"I must make the bed first, I reckon."

However she obeyed, and when she saw Lady Clarinda lying upon the bed, she set up a piteous howl.

"Bless us, what must be done!—She 's as dead, as dead can be—." Her eyes were, indeed, closed again.

"You must take off her wet clothes, and lay her upon some dry blankets, and get her some hot brandy-and-water, or hot anything."

"Law, sir! I daren't touch her."

"But you must, dear good woman—take off her wet things tenderly, and I 'll give you more shillings than ever you had in your life."

And this was her rude handmaid—and while she blundered in her work, Gerald, who had seen some strong waters in the chaplain's room, fetched them; and again the blue left her lips, and a faint colour spread over them. Presently her breast began to heave—warmed by the blankets and what she had taken; her head dropped upon the hand which was clasped in Gerald's, and she sank to sleep.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was Canham himself,—it was the bitter tears and half inarticulate syllables with which, when restored to himself in some degree, he called for his Clarinda—which first seemed to remind everybody that she was not there.

Madame turned, in her harsh manner, round, and hastily asked where she had hid herself that she could not come near a brother she pretended to love so much. She supposed the sight of blood made her sick, or some such nonsense.

"Be pacified, my lord," repeated the surgeon to Canham; "this agitation will destroy you.—Your sister shall be sent for."

"Is she alive, then?" said the boy;—"Tell me, sir; I thought I saw her dead body—oh, my God!"

"A dream, my dear lord—a sudden rush of the blood before you fell confused your senses;—your sister is quite well."

But the Earl, starting at the words as if aroused from a dream, rose instantly from his chair, and clapping his hand upon his forehead, hurried out of the room, followed by his eldest daughter and Madame. Bewildered by all that had passed, and distracted at the danger of his son, it seemed that he had actually forgotten what had happened,— he was a passionate, not a cruel father; and he now bustled away, asking what had been done, and who had saved his daughter; . . . . for that she *was* saved every one assured him.

Where she was however, nobody knew; —but there was now a universal dispersion. The house was filled with human beings. A search was made, and she was found.

It was her own maid's room in which she was lying. The Countess put her head hastily in. She lay asleep upon the bed—her cheek resting against Gerald's hand, which was clasped fast in hers, her hair falling over her face. She lay in a sort of child-like slumber and security. He was bending over her, gazing with inexpressible tenderness; and watching with breathless anxiety the measured respirations of her whom he had

preserved. The old crone was standing looking out of the window.

That picture engraved itself in indelible characters on the Countess's heart—

"Askance, the devil turned!"

Gerald did not perceive the Countess, so intently was he gazing. And she—and for that one action, she deserved those tortures of which she too surely tasted the bitterness on earth; she slid down stairs, and told her father and the governess that the lost was found, and led them both up, with hushing voice, to peep into the chamber.

The scene needed no comment; but her looks supplied one.

"Ma foi!" began the governess,—and at the words Clarinda started, awoke, and drew away her hand, and Gerald rose.

"Do not let her be disturbed," said he, anxiously. "It was with the utmost difficulty I brought her to her senses; life ebbs and flows still.—I beseech you, my lord, let her be kept perfectly quiet for some time."

"*I* should send for the surgeon,". . . . said the Countess.

"Yes, send for the doctor," said the Earl.

"Who 's there? Go and tell Mr. Denny to come here, if he pleases."

They all remained standing round the bed. The Earl, his jealous suspicions again aroused by the base insinuations of his daughter, looked coldly upon his poor innocent child. She turned her eyes with a sort of deprecating solicitude upon her father,—then looked wistfully in her sister's face. In vain—not one kind look—not one kind word—consoled her poor, beating, anxious heart!

Again she looked at her father, again at her sister—but there was no pity. She gave a low, smothered sob, and closed her eyes again, while a tear or two stole from under her eyelids.

Gerald's eyes were fast filling, while his heart seemed brimming over for the forlorn and desolate girl.

Well, sir," . . . . said the Earl to the tutor, looking at the door,—but Gerald kept his place. Madame and the Countess pushed one another.

"Eh, bien, Monsieur!"

"I hope, my lord, I may be allowed a few minutes to hear the report of the surgeon—Indeed I *must* hear it."

He could not and he would not leave her. He felt that he had earned the right to stay.

The bustling, noisy Mr. Denny now entered. A coarse man he was; a gross flatterer of the rich,—a hard, insensible practitioner among the poor,—a disgrace to that profession which mingles such numbers of admirable men amongst its baser members.

At the noise he made she again opened her languid eyes.

He felt her pulse—"Very weak and low! Quiet—she must be kept quiet."

"Move her to another bed? . . . . Better let her be."

"But," said Gerald, "this bed must be damp; she was put into it in her wet clothes."

"Do her no harm, sir;—only keep her quiet till to-morrow, Madame. Youth—youth soon gets over these things—Hardy and spirited girl, my lord! Think yourself very ill, my dear, I dare say—only a little ducking—cools young blood—ha! ha! Madame?"

The patient writhed, and as she moved screamed.

"What's the matter now?" said the doctor.

Gerald flew to the bed-side.

"Really, my lord, said Madame, smiling, "if *you* do not think this an improper place for young men, *I* do. Please, Mr. James—I suppose you are satisfied by this time,—please to leave this apartment, and let Lady Clarinda be properly looked to."

And this was all the return Gerald got for his courage and devotion, except one look of gratitude again from the Lady Clarinda, who, as he left the room, tried to turn her face to the wall, but groaned with the effort.

Gerald's feelings upon this occasion will be best expressed by an extract from one of his letters to his mother.

* * * * *

. . . . "As I raised this poor, flaccid body in my arms—of this poor child, deserted, as it were, by all the world—and left to the care and pity of one almost a stranger—my heart bled for her—and the most intense feeling of compassion mingled itself with the interest, inspired by a character so ingenuous, so candid, so courageous, and so sincere—as, in spite of all her errors, hers had just shewn itself to be . . . .

"We were in perfect solitude—she lay

resting on my arms upon the grass, her little bosom fluttering and heaving with returning life—her eyes closed . . . .

"It was such a glorious afternoon—Strange that, even in moments, such as these, there should be something within us still at liberty, as it were, to receive impressions from the surrounding scene — Those majestic trees were softly murmuring over our heads — the sun gleaming through them as he walked the heavens in the full majesty of noon . . . . all so perfectly calm, so profoundly still. I, and this young being just rescued from death—alone before our Great Creator—in the presence of his sublime and tranquil image, nature—No, mother, in such moments as these there are no differences of condition — there is no remembrance of respective situations—we are as the angels of God in Heaven . . . . will you wonder that as I kneeled by this frail, fair, delicate form, the slender arms thrown listlessly upon the grass—the small head, with its dripping hair, bent, powerless, upon the shoulder—the very image, as she lay, of helpless innocence and destitution—that, as I kneeled, my heart, pledging itself in solemn vows to shield, pro-

tect, and console . . . . that I stooped down and ratified this self-formed treaty with a brother's kiss upon the ashy temples?

"I was startled, though, for she opened her eyes as my lips touched her forehead.

"She gazed full into my eyes with a dreaming, confused expression—

"'I am very cold,' was all she said, 'carry me home—'

"I could venture to move her now—and folding her dress around her, I took her up in my arms—her head fell upon my bosom—those slender arms hanging lifelessly downwards. How often do I catch myself mentioning those small, slender arms!—I do not know what there is in them that gives so much character to her figure, but they are almost the first thing one remarks about her—they are rather long for her size, as in those whose growth has been checked by the vile mismanagement in fashion at present—but they are so thin, and yet so delicately small, so purely white, so girlish, yet so fair!—

"As I pressed this little dripping being to my warm bosom, how did my heart beat with pure and generous purpose! Yes! mother, I could cheerfully have laid down my life for this darling little sister. I have told

you how truly I had experienced, at that dread moment, the trivial nature of those barriers of the world, which a short time before seemed as an impassable gulph between us.—Had she been the child of your own bosom, mother, I could not have loved her more sincerely.

"I am describing slowly what passed rapidly. I hastened with my burden across the bridge and entered the castle, by the little postern door that leads to the passage and turret at the back of the library, where there are stairs, by which the young ladies always descend to their lessons—so up these stairs I tottered—and seeing the door open, of a room evidently belonging to a female, I hurried in and laid her, for she was again fainting, upon the bed.

"The silence that pervaded this side of the castle was appalling. No one seemed to be in hearing—all had followed in the wake of the great Lord mourning over his heir .... for I cannot say the father lamenting over his son —and this poor little outcast, once rescued from the water, seemed entirely forgotten. I dared not leave her—yet it was evident that immediate assistance was indispensable: what could I do?"

After a description of what followed, he continues:—

"At last the Earl and the Countess, followed by the two governesses, entered in a very grear hurry, with a 'Where is she? Where is she?'

"She was resting on my arm as I kneeled down by the bed, and her drooping head had fallen upon her shoulder;—what an affecting spectacle!

"Well, mother, certainly you women, when you once do contrive to get rid of your hearts, are . . . . nay—I can't compare you to anything, for there is nothing in creation like you.

"Would you believe it!—a sneer, a wicked sneer passed from one governess to another. This was the first expression to be observed upon the countenance of either. . . . . ."

CHAPTER VIII.

Gerald having been, as we have related, thus unceremoniously dismissed, returned to his room an altered man. The events of the last few hours seemed to have worked the changes of years in his character; he felt himself no longer a shy, irresolute, and somewhat uncertain youth—he seemed to have stepped into manhood at once. The events of the last few hours had ripened his heart and his understanding.

For the being he had rescued — had borne in his arms, had pressed lifeless to his bosom—there had suddenly arisen an interest equally tender and intense. It was not as a brother, far less as a lover, that he regarded this fair and tender young creature—His feelings might be better compared to those of a mother, when first she clasps a breathing, living infant to her heart—for it was something more tender, more devoted than father can feel, that now swelled within his bosom.

Every faculty in him seemed animated and aroused; he felt that he had given her life—and that he was called upon to protect the happiness of that being, whom he had called, as it were, into new existence.

Separated he was from her at the moment, and she was left to the barbarous insensibility of those who almost hated her; but he would find the means to watch over and protect her.

He now took off his wet garments, and asked leave to see Lord Canham; but was told he must be kept perfectly quiet, and at present could see no one; he sent again to enquire after the Lady Clarinda, and was told she was asleep.

Weary and exhausted, he flung himself upon his bed, and tried for an hour's sleep or two; but the waters were gushing in his ears — again, he heard the sound as they closed over him—again dived—again choking and struggling, he arose to the surface gasping for breath—again, plunging to the lowest depths, he seized the white garments, and panting, straining, his heart beating, his limbs shaking, dragged the senseless body to the land—again, he gazed upon that lifeless form—again, he strove to shout for help

to the retiring servants—again, he clasped the cold body to his heart—again, those affectionate, penetrating eyes opened, gazed, and were fixed on his.

He could not sleep—he arose. Evening was by this time closing in—and the apartment was almost hidden in the darkness—he had slept a short time. He struck a light, and determined to go down to the library and fetch a book; for he felt little inclined for communication that evening with any of the company he should meet at supper — the gross chaplain, the stupid Powel, or the poor pompous Earl himself.

As he passed the foot of the little stairs, he heard the noise of contention in the room in which Lady Clarinda was lying; harsh voices, cries, and exclamations, sobs and entreaties mingled with the cold, stern, authoritative voice of Madame.

One friend was now with Clarinda, her own maid Mary—one of those true, firm and faithful friends, that kind-hearted servants sometimes prove, to those who have no other friend on earth.

Mary had happened to be absent, on some little business or other, when the catastrophe occurred— or Gerald would not have found

her young mistress abandoned to his care alone.

Returned from her walk, she flew to the room where her mistress was lying; her bright rosy cheeks crimsoned with impatience, her blue eyes streaming with tears. She had entered just as Madame was ordering a removal, which Clarinda faintly but earnestly opposed.

"I insist that an end is put to this *fantasque* nonsense; she *shall* go to her proper room."

A pause, and then a shriek of pain!

And,—"Really, Lady Clarinda!" in Hughes' voice—"one would think I was killing you."

"And so you are killing her, Miss Hughes," in Mary's voice; "heaving her up in that-aways".

"Oh my limbs, my limbs! you are tearing me in pieces!"

Gerald sprang up the stairs.

"Ah, Heaven! Ah, Madame! Ah, Mary! —dear Mary, don't let them—my pains are dreadful; let me lie here."

"You should have thought of all this, before you jumped yourself into the water, to vex Milord, your father, Lady Clarinda," —said Madame, harshly.

"Alas! alas! my despair," said she, in a voice of agony; "ah, Mary, Mary—what shall I do! Will no one have pity on me? Canham—where are *you*, Canham?"

"You need not call him so loud, for he's in his bed too, Miladi."

"He broke a blood-vessel seeing you pulled out of the water," said Miss Hughes.

"And lies at the point of the death, and cannot come near you at all," said Madame.

A piercing shriek was the answer, and bursting from her attendants, screaming, "Canham! Canham! Canham! let me go to my Canham—Nay, Madame, I will go;" with the violence of desperation, "don't hold me, you sha'nt hold me—dying! dying! dying!—let me go—let me go. Good Heavens!—Nay, Madame, you shall not hold me!— . . . May God punish you as you deserve! — . . . barbarous woman!"

She tore herself from the arms of her attendants,—and in spite of the racking pains in her limbs, dashed forward, covered with her long white dressing-gown, her hair falling in showers over her neck and shoulders—and uttering this dreadful and passionate exclamation, flew to the door, opened it, and fell into the arms of Gerald.

Little did she heed this:—"Take me to Canham," said she, slipping through them, and falling on her knees, for she could not stand, she looked up imploringly in his face; "Is he dying?—Oh, is he dying?—Take me to him, take me to him,"— . . . and sank upon the floor.

"Be comforted, sweet Lady Clarinda. He is not dying, he shall not die— . . . He is better, he will do well; but he must be kept perfectly quiet—you should not want to go to him—let me lay you again on your bed."

"Ah, kindest Mr. James," whispered she; "is he better—will he live? Lay me on the bed—lay me anywhere; but I like this little room. . . . Ah, Heavens!"— . . . with a screech of pain, as he gently moved along.

All this passed in less time than it takes to relate it. Madame, surprised out of her presence of mind, had not words to interpose. She was, in fact, borne down for the moment by the impetuosity of feelings rendered desperate by pain of body and mind, and irritated by the contemptuous unkindness of those around.

So Gerald once more held her in his arms; and as he approached the bed, perceiving the blankets and mattress all damp

and wetted, he desired Mary to take off the wet things, and bring a fresh bedding, with warm and comfortable sheets.

"I will hold her till you come back," said he.

Her head sank again exhausted upon his breast; and so he stood calmly and composedly, shrouding her with his arms as well as he could.

Madame looked haughtily displeased—Miss Hughes tittered—but Gerald looked authoritatively round:

"What are you laughing at, Miss Hughes?—Do you laugh at seeing a young creature sinking under the most rending agonies of body and mind?—Or do you laugh at seeing a man perform those common offices of humanity which ought to belong to you. . . . Nay, you shall not take her from me—she shall not be disturbed till the bed is ready—Sweet Lady Clarinda," looking down upon her as a mother on her sick infant, "be patient; . . . you shall soon be at rest."

Mary now returned with the bedding, which she was putting on as well as she could, while Miss Hughes stood sulkily looking on.

"Make haste!" said Gerald impatiently—

for he felt his patient tremble with cold. "Good Heavens! Miss Hughes, what are you about?—Cannot you help to prepare the bed for your mistress and mine?"

"Yours, if you please," said she saucily, "not mine, I hope."—

But Madame said, "Get the bed ready, Miss Hughes."

The bed was at length prepared, and with the utmost tenderness he laid her down in it, and remained gazing upon her some little while; then he stooped down and asked her softly if he could do anything more for her.

"Let me lie here," whispered she.

But the patience of Madame seemed at length exhausted.

"Ciel," she began, "M. le Précepteur—c'en est assez—have the goodness to pay some better regard to the proprieties, and leave this young lady before her reputation be again—"

"Madame!" cried Gerald, colouring to the eyes, and at last losing all self-command in indignation, "have done this instant with your wicked insinuations.—This young lady's life I have saved at the peril of my own; and the life I have saved I will protect. . . .

Have done with your blasphemous insinuations against her innocence and mine.—She is as pure as a cherub from Heaven—and as to a cherub from Heaven do I devote myself to her :—She shall no longer be the sport of your cruel injustice, or of Miss Hughes's vile contempt—*I* will protect her, if no one else will— . . . and if it must be so, the Earl shall decide between us. In this room she wishes to stay—in this room she shall stay.—She must be carefully tended, and she must sleep.— . . . I am a little of a physician, Lady Clarinda, will you take what I prescribe ?"—stooping down to her again.

" Oh, yes, willingly," said she, turning her grateful approving eyes upon him.

He asked for the medicine-chest, which Mary fetched, and stood with the gravity of a professional man, weighing and measuring; while Madame, drawn up to more than her usual height, remained like one petrified at an assurance and opposition she had never expected to encounter in that house — and Miss Hughes looked both cowed and humbled.

He administered the medicine—stood by the bedside some time watching the effect; and as the eyes waxed heavy, the lids closed,

and the covering rose and sank under the soft breathings of slumber, he signed to the two governesses to leave the room, whispered some directions to Mary, who sat at the foot of the bed,—her large blue eyes distended with wonder,—and then following Madame and Miss Hughes, who rose and left the apartment under the fascination of his authority; he softly closed the door, and descended into the library.

Reader! have you ever seen a huge bull go growling and roaring out of a pasture-field, under the influence of the eye and voice of command alone—Madame was certainly not very like a bull in appearance—but the obstinacy that yielded to the eye of command, was, to all appearance, as invincible.

* * * *

"Abominable! scandalous!"—tell it me all over again, Madame."—

Madame repeated the story of Gerald's offences.

The Countess was lying upon her couch—her face was turned away from Madame—She seemed to be looking out of the window.

"And so he frightened you and Hughes out of the room?"—said she, at last, with something like a sneer— . . . she mused again.

Madame soon left the room, and she continued to ruminate upon the history she had related. The results of her ruminations, however, were made known to no one—except that Gerald, in the evening, stepping down to the library, met the Lady Countess upon the stairs.

She stopped him, and inquired for her sister.

He was a little surprised, but said he believed she was asleep, and that her own maid was now attending upon her.

She fixed her beautiful eyes upon him

"Then you have not seen her again?"

"No," said he, "I am not her physician."

"But you are more—you are her preserver."

"I am thankful I was on the spot at the moment."

"Ah! Mr James,"—said the haughty beauty, now no longer haughty, "ah! Mr. James,—how deeply are we indebted to your courage and tenderness!"

"Poor young creature!" . . . said he, with feeling. "Ah! if the Countess would supply to her the place of friend and adviser, which she so grievously wants, we should have no more of these distracting scenes.

She is so young," he pleaded, "such a mere child—her sister is so much more advanced, so much more capable—excuse me"— . . . for as he spoke those beautiful eyes were fixed in approbation upon him—"but she is so young so *very* young in all her feelings, . . . and she wants so much guidance—It seems a great liberty on my part," . . . hesitating, "but it is impossible not to see that Madame does not understand how to direct . . . or how to make her happy."

"You flatter me by thinking I could,"—passed sweetly as honey from her lips.

"Indeed I do," replied he, a little surprised at the way in which she spoke."

"Your good opinion, . . . the good opinion of one who has played the part you have played this morning, is precious to me— . . . Tell me only what you would have me do."

He could hardly forbear repeating her last words aloud, "have me do," they so much astonished him—but, master of himself, he determined to take advantage of this sudden condescension—the result, as he thought, of gratitude to him, as the means of saving her sister—and represent the case as he saw it, in all its importance.

They were still standing on the stairs

where they had met, but the library door was open.

"If I had a few moments," . . . said he, with hesitation, "a very few moments . . . I could explain my meaning."

"Is there any one in the library?" said she.

"No one."

"Then let us go in there, and give me your lecture in the proper place."

She held out her beautiful hand to be handed, not followed, down stairs.

Again he was surprised at her condescension, but charmed by her beauty, and more charmed by a softness and sensibility, of which he had thought her perfectly incapable; he handed her to a chair, and remained standing before her.

"Well,"—said she, after a moment's pause, looking up with a smile, "now for my lesson."

He was gazing at her as she sat, and started as she spoke—he had forgotten for the moment what had brought them there.

"I see," said she, "that now you have got me here, you have nothing to teach me—What must I do for this poor child, Clarinda?"

The word recalled him to his serious duty; and recovering, as from a short trance, he began gently, and patiently, to explain his impression of the character of this interesting girl—of her powers, of her qualities, of the misdirection her character was taking, under the very mistaken mixture of neglect and severity, which formed the whole of Madame's education.

He shewed how much gentleness, yet how much steadiness, was required to form one so wayward, and vehement—yet so generous, reasonable, and good, to what she might become. He related, in a touching manner, the events of the preceding morning; her ingenuous submission to reason and to right; her generous disregard of concealment, when convinced that it was mean and wrong; the fear of her father; yet her determination to use no disguise with him.—The cause which had precipitated her into an act of passion so deplorable, was a mystery to him, but he feared some severity on the part of the Earl, too exquisitely painful to a being so sensitive.

While he said all this, the eyes of the Countess rested upon his face with an expression of great attention; when he ended they dropped, and she said,

"We have been all to blame but you.— . . . I will endeavour to repair my share of the mischief."

Delighted with so much candour and gentleness, he was now, indeed, ready to throw himself at her feet, and thank her for the generous promise.

What all her beauty was powerless to effect, one sentence sufficed to accomplish, —but it cannot be denied that one sentence goes far from lips of so much beauty; and that, though external charms are powerless where moral approbation is wanting, they enhance that feeling when once excited, to an inconceivable degree. What would have been approbation in the case of an ordinary mortal, became almost adoration for her.— He thought her at that moment an angel, and at the moment he looked as if he did. She was satisfied with that look,—she felt more and more inclined to be generous to her sister.

Nothing makes human nature so good-natured as a triumph over a suspected rival; and she now left the room feeling more affectionately towards poor Clarinda, than she had ever done before in her life.

CHAPTER IX.

THE course of things for many weeks after this was as follows:—

Canham continued very ill, and suffered much. His constitution was so delicate that it was doubtful whether any progress whatsoever had been made in recovering from the shock it had received. He was still confined to his bed.

For a few days he had been the object of intense solicitude on the part of the Earl, and had evidently received the greatest gratification from every mark of his father's tenderness; but as the boy's situation continued much the same, and no new event occurred to excite in the father a fresh interest, he gradually returned to his usual habits of busy indolence; and was again absorbed in trifling occupations, to the neglect of every serious duty.

His visits became fewer and briefer.

At first, he ran in every morning with a careless inquiry; soon, whole days passed without his ever visiting his son's apartment; at last, except a hasty inquiry from his valet in a morning as to how Canham had passed the night, he seemed almost to have forgotten him.

Not that the boy was really an object of indifference to his father, but the Earl's character was so superficial and careless, that he easily contented himself by settling that everything was to be as he wished it to be; and because he hoped and desired, that there should be nothing really alarming in his son's illness, he found little difficulty in persuading himself that it was as he would have it. With characters weak as his, the very strongest interest in the world proves generally insufficient to arouse to continued exertion—or to vanquish that indolent habit of acquiescing in things, which chills the heart; while time is trifled and amused away in the most insignificant occupations.

A somewhat whimsical clergyman, whom I once heard preaching to a rural congregation—speaking of the vices and errors of the great and rich, interrupted himself and turning to his audience, said,—" Not that I think

the *poor* any better than the rich,—*far* . . . from it."

The description here given of a negligent parent, who prefers his idle inclinations to his serious duties,—and of the pride, ill-temper, jealousy, and tyranny of his eldest daughter, happens from the course of the story, to be attached to characters belonging to the aristocracy. Like the worthy clergyman above, I interrupt my discourse for one moment, to explain myself.

I am quite of the good gentleman's opinion, and profess to believe, that if great people have faults and vices, little people are not altogether without theirs: nay, that were a balance to be struck, it is very problematical on which side it would incline. I have no desire to add my little stone to the shower, which it is at present the pleasure of some to level against a body,—which, however great its privileges and advantages,—we might, I think, learn to look upon without envy . . . regarding it, with the admirable Sismondi,—not as existing for its own selfish enjoyments and purposes; but to form, as it does form, the true defence of freedom in every state—whether by restraining the despotism of the *one;* or by

curbing the far more awful despotism of the many.

My purpose is to expose the evil effect of evil passions, be they found where they may; not to make attacks upon any particular caste in my country.—I think it quite possible that a father may neglect his duties at an alehouse, as completely, as when washing a *conus* worth one hundred guineas—and that a woman may be as cruel and ill-behaved in linsey-woolsey, as in velvet.—

The boy felt his father's desertion silently, but deeply. At first, he used to inquire with some impatience when his father was coming to see him. If asked, "Did he want to speak with the Earl? . . . Should he be fetched?" he would say, "No,"—turn on his pillow—after a few moments' sigh,—then shut his eyes and seem about to fall asleep.

A few days elapsed, during which he appeared to suffer much from the irritation of excited and disappointed hope; he then ceased to ask for, and never mentioned him.

His tutor, Mr. Powel, he allowed to enter his room, and now and then make his inquiries — civilly answering him when he asked, "Could he do him any service?"

and dismissing him, nothing loath, to Miss Hughes and his rabbit-shooting.

The representations of Gerald had induced the eldest sister at first to visit him frequently; but habits of benevolent attention to the sick, and of patient endurance of that fatigue,—which is ennui intolerable to those not actuated by real love,—are not the results of a momentary impression. Her attentions were evidently an effort, and given in that sort of indifferent manner which is, to a poor, helpless sufferer so painful. It was evident that Canham was anything but comforted by them; and the excellent physician, under whose care he now was placed, perceiving this, advised her, under the convenient expression, "too exciting," to be sparing in her visits;—an injunction with which she very readily complied.

But Gerald could never be too much in the room—here, as elsewhere, this young man, strong in the power of reason, truth, and benevolence, seemed to be the solace, support, and delight of the sufferer. He read to him, he sat by him, he soothed him, and he controlled him—when his irritable and undisciplined feelings hurried him into fits of impatience, most distressing to others and dangerous to himself.

His attentions were shared by a nurse, who had been Canham's foster-mother, and who, having settled at a distance, had, at his earnest desire, been sent for to attend him. The old botanist too strolled up, from time to time, to his room—and at last came Clarinda.—

She, too, had kept her bed many days.

A rheumatic fever had been the consequence of her excited state of mind, and of all the unfortunate circumstances which had prevented her having proper assistance, at the moment of her being drawn from the water—she had lain long on a wet mattress, and in her wet clothes—her cries and screams, when they first attempted to move her from her bed, had given but too sure indication of what was impending.

She suffered all the agonies of this horrible and painful disorder with a fortitude and patience worthy of her character. Her sister's attendance at her bedside evidently soothed and delighted, as much as it astonished her. Often would the grateful girl fix her eyes in fond admiration upon that face, which now she might dwell upon, with the hope of receiving a smile of kindness. Often did the poor, wasted hands creep

painfully out of bed—she would take the beautiful hand of her sister, and kiss it fervently.

But what could these little instances of love and gratitude do against a nature so perverted?—Will it be thought possible that a little gratification of vanity was all the sentiment they excited in the Countess? . . .

Her heart was now beginning to be occupied by the attachment which she had suffered to engage it before she was aware.

Living in that retirement, which was the lot of many noblemen's daughters in those days, and rarely mingling with young people of her own age; her heart and fancy had, as yet, remained unoccupied—and it was, perhaps, as much the want of something to interest her, as any other feeling, which had led her to feel inclined to exercise the power of her attractions over the handsome young tutor.—Like many before her, she was drawn in farther than she intended.

Something in his character— . . . the spirit, and vehemence, which he at times displayed, had captivated her imagination—and a passion began to take possession of her heart, which though it would have been innocent, and, perhaps, praiseworthy under other circumstances, in her, might be called degrad-

ing—for surely, any passion ought to be called degrading which tends to the sacrifice of that which we have learned to consider as all, most valuable and dignified in life. And when the young Countess secretly indulged in dangerous meditations—and in defiance of everything she had been accustomed to think praiseworthy—namely, the maintenance of her own station and dignity,—allowing herself to dwell upon the possibility of elevating this obscure young man to a place by her side, regardless of what she knew must be the feelings of her father, and of all those she respected in the world, . . . she was indulging in schemes which were wrong—and which, to her conscience, appeared more wrong, than perhaps others may think them.

Certain it is, that sentiments such as these could produce no permanent good fruits.—The sick chamber of poor Clarinda was soon deserted; and the suffering girl would have been left in cheerless solitude, to agonies which might have appalled the bravest—had not one humble, but inestimable treasure proved the solace and support of these heavy hours.

Mary was the daughter of Canham's nurse, and had fortunately been long installed in

the place of Clarinda's maid. She was warmly attached to her, having run about in the nursery as a child; and often played with the little delicate Clarinda, six or seven years younger than herself.

Mary, the picture of neatness and cheerfulness, whose kind blue eyes beamed tenderness and affection, devoted herself to her task with the utmost alacrity and good-will; under her care the sufferer struggled on—slowly recovered, and at length was restored to freedom and to life.

To what a freedom!—and to what a life!

The moment, . . . the reward of so much patience and suffering, arrived.—The Lady Clarinda rose from her bed, and was suffered to visit her brother.

She arose pale, thin, and extenuated, reduced to almost a skeleton, and dragging her still painful limbs with difficulty across the floor; but what was pain?—what was weakness to her now?—She was to visit her brother.

With trembling hands, hurrying on her dress—making ten thousand promises to repress her vehemence, to restrain her tears, . . . to be quiet and to be good — her eyes sparkling, her colour rising and falling, she dressed, for the first time; and so,

leaning on Mary's arm, was led to Canham's room—and in a few minutes she was crouching, rather than kneeling by his bedside; holding his wasted, feverish hand in hers—glueing there her lips in silence.

The boy, whose countenance had much changed in expression, fixed his eyes, now enlarged by sickness, with calm and intense love upon her. He seemed too blest to speak or move—perfect contentment—the beatitude of satisfied affection, spoke in, but no longer animated, his wasted countenance.—

The eyes of the spectators were filled with tears.

Gerald, and the old man, and Mary, were the only members of the household present at this scene.—Where was the father?—Where the sister?—when these two forlorn sufferers were at length reunited. Who was there to comfort and support them at a meeting so affecting?—Three absolute strangers!. . .

As for them, they at that time little felt this desertion—they had been accustomed to this family estrangement—they had grown, as it were, together; and the joy of reunion atoned for everything.

CHAPTER X.

Revived for a few days by the presence of his Clarinda, the boy, however, too soon sank again into his former state; and even her caresses failed to cheer or reanimate him. There was that at his heart—a sadness deep-seated—a disgust with life—which seemed to dry up the very fountains of being. He was not actually dying of a broken-heart, but sinking under a melancholy most unnatural and fatal at his age;—a sadness the most touching,—the hidden sadness of a boy.

A profound melancholy had evidently become habitual to him, which nothing could divert; and which the presence of his poor, friendless Clarinda seemed indeed rather to increase.

His eyes would anxiously follow her as she tottered about the room;—then he would agitate himself in a restless manner on the bed, as if struggling with some suppressed feeling, and sigh deeply.

She would fly to his side, her head bent down over his face; her soft voice whispering the tenderest soothings and inquiries.

"What is it, dearest Canham?—Can I do anything?—Stay, let me hold you so.—Will it be comfortable so?" . . .

And the little arm was passed under his pillow, striving, with painful effort, to support him.

"Will it do so?—Or so?" . . .

Then he would lift up his head, give her a fond, hasty kiss, and sink down again despondingly;—while she supported his shoulder with her poor feeble arm, and he, ignorant of the constrained attitude in which she was leaning, might perhaps sink asleep;—and there would this dear little being stand for hours, in a perfect martyrdom of suffering, rather than disturb his slumbers by the slightest motion.

How confidingly in this time of sorrow did her eyes learn to fix themselves upon Gerald!—How confidingly did her heart now lean upon his!—She had proved him; she could trust him as a friend,—father,—brother,—all in one.—Once more did her feelings expand to confidence and affection; and the kind tutor, was added to Canham,

the old botanist, and Mary—to enlarge the narrow circle of her most tender and innocent love.

As for Gerald, the interest he now felt in these young creatures was indeed exceedingly great. His whole time, — his whole thoughts, —with the exception of some forbidden wanderings, were devoted to them.

He was a constant attendant in the sick room; now reading, now talking, now quietly silent; studying to alleviate, in every possible way, the sufferings of the unhappy pair. It was he, who would slide the cushion under the slender aching arm;—it was he, who punctually remembered to pour out, and to bring to her, the draughts and cordials which the delicate state of her health required. It was he, who answered the anxious inquiring eye, raised from her brother's pale face,—with cheerful looks of encouragement. It was he, who, when she sank, exhausted by the side of her patient, would cover her with a shawl, and watch, while the brother and sister slumbered side by side.

I have seen a guardian angel, imaged as hovering over an infant's cradle, with looks

of tender protection all his own.—It was not mother's love ;—it was not sister's love ; —it was not mortal love in any of its forms ; —it was the pure, divine, angelic tenderness for innocence that is helpless ;—and such was Gerald's for these two poor young creatures; and no angel's love was purer than the love he bore Clarinda. But, free from the slightest taint of earthly passion, his feelings were avowed and undisguised ; he dared to persist openly in the line of conduct he had adopted ; while Canham's presence sheltered Clarinda from the ill-natured persecution of Madame, who, indeed, for a time, ceased to trouble herself about her.

For the Countess had slipped down stairs, and in this very unpoetical manner had hurt her aristocratical foot ; so she was confined to her sofa,—and the lamentations,—and the pity,—and the tenderings,—and the coaxings of Madame, may be compared to those which were lavished upon Fanfan by a French governess, far more celebrated than, we fear, it will ever be our Madame's fate to become.

This accident prevented those meetings with Gerald which somehow or other now

almost daily took place; not by any manœuvering on his part, certainly, for his heart and his conscience had taught him their danger;—nor by any very apparent contrivance on hers,—for her heart, and her conscience, had taught her to be upon her guard.

Now, however, they seemed separated, and he taught himself to rejoice in the cause as a fortunate accident; and he determined to wean his mind from dangerous contemplations, while his time was devoted more unremittingly than ever to the chamber of Lord Canham.

He found, however, that he was not to be left undisturbed.

CHAPTER XI.

The haughty beauty lay one afternoon upon her sofa;—Madame, obsequious and flattering, had been rubbing the ancle with arquebusade water;—but the beautiful ancle was still swelled and uneasy;—it lay, in its light blue satin slipper, upon a cushion of white cambric trimmed with lace, and she, all-glowing with the warmth of the summer day, rested in her long, white lawn, deshabille upon her crimson cushions.

There was that in her attitude and countenance this day, which gave an air of almost tenderness to her very great beauty; for the large blue eyes were bent in reverie upon the ground, and a smile more soft, than ever yet had played around them, hung on those sweet rosy lips. Madame was administering the usual dose of mingled gossip and flattery—but the effect was not as it had wont to be;—the other beautiful foot might be seen moving impatiently on the sofa, beat-

ing and drumming with ennui and irritation; then the large eyes lighted as with a sudden resolution.—

"I will have some English reading. Tell Mr. James to come and read Milton," said the young lady.

"Mon Dieu!" cried Madame, "chère ange, ne vous fatiguez pas;—you are too ill for these lessons;—this tiresome Milton will ennuyez you to death;—let me read to you a delicious romance, just come—"

"No;—no more of your odious French trash now, Madame. Send for him, and let him read Milton."—

He was sitting by the bed of suffering, reading to the patient boy.

Crushed, as it were, against a bed-post, at the foot of the bed, lay what seemed to be a heap of white clothes; and a small head covered with pale light hair, buried between two thin long arms, rested in the centre of the heap.—She seemed to be asleep; while James continued to read.

Both his hearers were perfectly tranquil. At length the still, regular, breathings of the boy shewed that suffering for a moment was at an end, and that he too had fallen asleep; the voice of the reader sank into a

monotonous drawling, and then gradually dying away, he ceased. He sat, believing that both his young patients were slumbering and at peace, gazing upon the boy, who breathed quietly. He did not perceive that, huddled up, and buried, as she seemed to be, . . . and perfectly still as she lay . . . two eyes were fixed upon his countenance.—

He sat pondering upon the strange destiny which had thrown these two beings into the guardianship of one so young as he was.—He thought of their probable fate—their wild, untutored, yet good and generous natures;—on the dangers of that youth of passion, at the threshhold of which they were both standing;—on the possibility, late as it seemed to be, of commencing an education for them both;—of the endeavour to strengthen their reason—to inspire a sense of duty, and lead their imaginations to dwell on high responsibilities;—and so to prune and direct the wild luxuriance of their characters, as to train them to their true perfection.—

His face was turned to the boy—for the girl, he imagined, had been long asleep.—He heard some steps in the passage, and gliding to the door, he opened it noiselessly, and beheld the Countess's maid.—

She told him her errand, and summoned him to come instantly and read Milton to her Lady.—

He felt surprised, and started a little; but stepped down to the library, fetched the book, and then followed the abigail to the chamber of luxury—that delicious paradise which he now, for the first time, was permitted to enter.

It was a chamber to enshrine a houri, . . . rich silk curtains, the cabinets of marquetrie, the chairs covered with goblin tapestry—in all its gorgeous blues, crimsons, and yellows—the vast mirrors, the pictures, the vases of sweet flowers—the whole apartment redolent of perfume. . . . The Armida of this enchanted scene lay in all her beauty upon a sofa covered with soft cushions, one foot stretched out, as we said before, the blue ribands of her sandal unlaced, and hanging idly round it; the other, trim, delicate, and bound up in its tiny shoe, resting near. Madame, seated in wiry erect state, at a little distance, formed a contrast that finished the picture.

How dangerously beautiful did the scene appear to Gerald!

He came forward with his demure, student look of reserve — which set forth to advantage his peculiarly beautiful features, and the large masses of hair which hung round his brow of purest alabaster, and harmonized so well with his large lustrous eyes.—

She looked up as he entered, fixed her beautiful eyes upon him, and said, in a voice which was sweetness itself,

" Mr. James, I am a prisoner"— . . . pointing to her foot, " Will you be so complaisant as to read to me a little, in your delicious manner ? "—

And this was the Countess—the haughty and imperious Countess !

And as she spoke, she pointed with her delicate hand to a chair close beside her couch, and he sat down. — One moment their eyes met.

There was a pause of a few seconds—then, with a manner somewhat hesitating, and a voice that slightly trembled, he asked, what she would like to have read.

" Paradise Lost," she said, again raising her large lustrous eyes towards him, and looking so surpassingly lovely, that his breast fluttered, and his colour rose and

fell—she was so very beautiful—and whether he was so or not, it is certain at that moment she thought him so.

Thus sat this siren in the bower of her enchantments, while Gerald read, by her desire, those delightful lines :—

> " Now morn her rosy steps i'th' eastern clime
> Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
> When Adam waked, so customed, for his sleep
> Was airy light, of pure digestion bred,
> And temperate vapours blend, which the only sound
> Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
> Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
> Of birds on every bough.—Then, with voice
> Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
> Her hand soft touching, whispered thus : Awake,
> My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
> Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight !
> Awake ; the morning shines, and the fresh field
> Calls us ; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
> Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove !
> What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed !
> How nature paints her colours, how the bee
> Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweets !"

These lines, so rich, in their expression, are here inserted—they seem to describe the sort of luxury of feeling, in which the senses of the young man were being steeped while sitting in this beautiful apartment, the window opening upon the large balcony filled with flowers which sweetly per-

fumed the gale, while the eye fell beyond them upon the landscape of green woods and glades below.

His sense of honour prevented him from taking advantage, in the slightest degree, of the opportunity thus offered to him for intimating feelings, which he knew it to be his duty to restrain—but his imagination had received an impression—new, intoxicating, transforming: he had tasted of the cup of Circe.

He was, however, still sufficiently master of himself, and of his reason, to rejoice when the door opened, and the young lady's dinner appeared—He rose hastily, shut the book, and murmuring an apology, escaped to his own room; where, his senses bewildered—his heart beating—his imagination dazzled, every thought in confusion—he remained pacing up and down to recover his composure, before he ventured once more to descend to Lord Canham.

CHAPTER XII.

While these feelings were being excited in the chamber of the Countess—what had been going on in the quiet and simple apartment Gerald had quitted.

Softly as he had closed the door the boy opened his eyes,—and Clarinda, whose eyes had been fixed upon his face, bent forward to look at him; and then with her slender thin hand gently patted his shoulder, as one would do to a young child to soothe him to sleep.

But he shook the hand off—sighed and moved—as much as to say, "No—it is not that I want."

Then he fixed his eyes uneasily upon her face, and speaking with slowness and difficulty, he said,—

"Clarinda—Do you think we shall live again . . . after we are dead?"—

"I don't know,"—was the answer,—in a low—mournful tone.

"It seems,"—continued he, "as if I had been alive a very, very short time.—I have *lived* . . . and done nothing else;—and now I feel sorry to go into darkness and nothingness again.—Do you think I shall?"

"Then you think you shall die!" . . . said she with her usual abruptness—but with a bitterness inexpressible in her accent.

"I think I must"—was the answer.

And for all this reply, she retired to her station at the foot of the bed, shrank into the heap of garments,—crouched down her head, and buried her face again between her arms, and under her hair.—But this time she did not look through between those arms.—This time, she hid the very light of day, from her forlorn, yet dry eyes.

There was a silence;—and the boy breathed painfully. At last he said— . . .

"Our Father who art in heaven!" . . .

"What does that mean, Clarinda?"—

"Our Father!—a father—who art in heaven. . . . —Have we a father there, Clarinda?— . . . Is there some one in this wide, wide universe—this vast vault—this large vessel in which we are floating. . . . Is there a Father in it, do you think, Clarinda?"—

She lifted up her face—shook her head sorrowfully, and said—

"I don 't know."—

"Oh! if there were a Father," said the boy, "how glad I should be to go to him!"

"Go to him!"—said she mournfully.—

"Ah, Clarinda! how glad *we* should be to go to him?" . . .

She nodded assent, and sank down into her former position.

"I think," said the boy, after another long pause, "if I were but *sure* I should find him—I should be very glad to die."

"And I would be almost glad to let you," she replied in a low voice, and her head sank down again; and hidden by the clothes,—tears, still and silent as soft summer rain, literally poured from her eyes.

Another pause! . . .

"Clarinda,—what are you thinking about all the time you are at Church?"—

"I don't know," said she again, raising her head—"anything—nothing.—I used to look about when I was a child; and amuse myself as well as I could,—and now I *think* about—that is all the difference."

"Well, that is just what I do. . . .—It is

very strange that we have neither of us thought more about it.—Do you ever say your prayers?" . . . . whispered he, mysteriously.—"Some people do every night and morning."

"I never was taught any prayers except old Nurse . . . when I was a little thing—I used to say; Pray, 'God, bless Papa and Mama, and make me a good girl.' I left it off when I left the nursery, and had no one to bid me kneel down.—Brother, if there *be* a God!" . . .

—"My children," said the old man, softly opening the door, "how are you both—and what was that you said last, my pretty Lady Clarinda?—*If* there be?— . . . To be sure there is. . . . Have I not shewn him to you in the flowers? My children, comfort your poor hearts. . . . There is a God—a father to the fatherless, a—"

"Then he shall be *my* God,"—faltered the boy.

"— And will he raise the dead?"

"*We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed; in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump;—for the trumpet shall sound; and the dead shall be raised; and this corruption*

shall put on incorruption; and this mortality immortality"—replied the old man—"But wherefore, now, my children?—Surely, this is not the first time you have asked of yourselves these things?"

"Nay;" said the boy, "you know, sir, how it is with us—We are two poor, ignorant, ill-educated beings, wandering about upon this earth—coming we know not from whence—going we know not whither. We are two poor, desolate orphan children. We were content to wander together,—but now we both believe that we must part,— . . . And *she* would know what will become of me when I am dead:—and I would know what will become of her—when, like a poor little withered leaf, she is left to be blown about the world. — . . . If there *be* a father to the fatherless, why have we never been told of him?"

"It would have been a great comfort," said the girl.

—"I should have asked him a great many things, if I thought he would have heard me."

"Ask, then, for he will hear you."

—"And grant my prayers?" . . . said she, doubtingly.

"Or do better," said the old man.

"I understand you"—said she, sinking down again.

. . . "What I would ask, is, *his* life," repeated she to herself; "poor unhappy boy! —and will he not be better with his *Father?* . . . No, I will not ask *that*—but I will ask Him to pity me, when he takes him to himself . . . and to take the poor little Clarinda home too."

The good and simple old man now resumed his favourite subject.—He talked of creation, and its beauties, and its excellencies, and long he pursued the lovely theme, consoling the hearts of these young inquirers; and then he fetched his little black bible, and he read of life and immortality; and the touching words of the tender and pitying Lord Jesus; and he laid these two trembling children at their Saviour's feet.

* * * *

From this time, the study of the Bible became the constant occupation of these young creatures when alone; and it was surprising to see the healing effect of this new and serious occupation upon their spirits.

To those hackneyed (if we may venture to use the phrase) . . . in religion, to whom such

thoughts are become habitual—and too often, alas! only through habit retained — the change will appear astonishing which such a direction of the mind produced upon these two.

Their lively intelligences, bright imaginations, and most feeling hearts were filled with these consoling hopes and promises; —a new world was opened to their eyes,—new and fair as that which the Saviour bestowed, when his fingers unclosed the eyes of him who was born blind. What is meant by a new birth, they both truly and feelingly experienced: and their situation gave a force and reality to many Scriptural expressions adapted to the situation of those suddenly converted from the dreariness of unbelief, or the darkness of idolatry,—which escape us, who have been from infancy carefully educated in religion.

It is not intended by this to imply that a religious education is not, therefore, a thing of priceless value; it is, in truth, an advantage which no subsequent teaching can rival—but merely to observe, that in this one respect the mind is acted upon in a less lively manner. We must remember also, that these children were in a position pecu-

liarly favourable to the development of religious feelings; one believing himself about to depart for the hidden world—the other, anticipating with terror the dread separation, when severed from him so devotedly loved, she should be left to wander alone!

The summer had waned while the two poor children were still in their beds—a mild, soft autumn witnessed their reunion.

Clarinda gathered strength evidently from day to day, in spite of her fatigues and anxieties, but the boy continued to fade.

Time rolled over them—sad, yet peaceful—while their two loving hearts mingled thought and affection together; and in the new and interesting study in which they were engaged, their minds became daily more and more strengthened and prepared for that which, to the bystanders, it appeared but too evidently soon must be.

A sort of masmus — the cause and effect at once, as it would seem, of the melancholy of his spirits—a cough, which threatened from day to day to occasion a fresh rupture of the vessel—a pale, emaciated cheek—a hollow, glittering eye—those fatal prognostics, one by one, succeeded each other so insensibly, as at first scarcely to occasion

alarm; but slowly, steadily, though imperceptibly, the symptoms continued to advance.

Gerald and the good old botanist were unwearied in their cares and attentions,—and more especially were they earnest in assisting these unhappy children, to develope the new and important ideas that now occupied their minds; and in directing the thoughts of the unhappy Clarinda to those consolations, which could alone support her in that dark hour, which they both believed to be rapidly approaching.

The winter passed away in this manner—and it seems hardly necessary to say how closely these four friends became attached to each other;—how the boy and girl learned to look up to Gerald as the wisest and best of friends; and how poor Mr. Green regarded him as one of the very most excellent of human beings.

But he knew himself better.—During these hours of apparent calm and serious occupation, what were the hidden struggles of his soul?—How many secret shames and self-reproaches—as each recurring day the phantom haunting his imagination—had to be driven out by efforts the most strenuous, and too often unavailing?

Not that by a syllable—by a glance—had he in one single instance betrayed his feelings to the object of them: but Gerald had been taught in that good school which demands the *heart*—and while in that silent sanctuary all was not right, the utmost correctness of external conduct could never satisfy him with himself.

As for the object of so much internal contest, she maintained a strange, equivocal demeanour—in her movements all contrast and uncertainty. It was plain that she too was all at variance with herself; yet as time passed on, a keen observer might have remarked, that her resolutions were gradually assuming something like consistency.

CHAPTER XIII.

So passed the winter.

The spring opened mild and sweet—and the fresh buds burst forth—and birds carolled on the branches—and the sun—that mighty giant, renewed his strength, and walked, rejoicing in the heavens.

But clouds begin fast to gather over the serene blue vault — and these two angelic spirits must now bend their footsteps to the frowning, dark abyss—that yawns, deep and fathomless, before us all—

One must descend—the other, desolate and despairing, must hang, speechless and tearless, over the dread confine;—and then return, her soul all darkness, to a world of cold pale light . . . . to travel on alone.

Such was her dream . . . .

She saw him descend, wan and emaciated, into the lurid shades; he beckoned her to follow, but she could not come—Borne, as it were, on pale pinions, she hung, fluttering,

over the deep darkness .... She would have cried, but voice was refused her—she listened, but all was silent—all, save the murmur of the dark surges that rose and fell—no voice, no form was there. She awoke in a cold sweat—her limbs trembling—her heart beating.

She had fallen asleep by his side—and it being supper time in the servants' hall, the nurse and Mary, who happened to be at that time alone in attendance, had gone down to supper, and had left her dozing upon the bed.

Startled, she was springing up, when he grasped her arm — and pointed, without speaking, to his lips.

The crimson tide was again welling slowly from his mouth.

She started back, aghast with horror — she could not speak, she could not cry—she looked at him with wild staring eyes .... he pointed to the blood, and shook his head.

Recollection returned in a moment—and it was Gerald she thought of—She rushed down the stairs, crossed the hall, and burst into the library.

He was there alone, sitting quietly reading by the light of his lamp, when this apparition

of despair, white as a spectre — her hair streaming back—her eyes straining from their sockets—rushed wildly in, and flinging herself at his feet, embraced his knees, for speak she could not—She could only wildly point to the door—seize his hand, and starting to her feet, drag him, speechless, up the stairs, pulling him violently forward .... he following as rapidly as he could.

She dragged him into Canham's room, and then, sinking down upon both her knees, raised her hands and her beseeching eyes to Heaven, with an expression of agony no words can describe.

Gerald rang the bell, but before assistance could arrive she was herself again—She was bathing the pale face; she was applying towels rung out in cold water—she was all skilful, active, and busy assistance .... intent upon what she was about, as if no interest, no sorrow, but such as a skilful physician might feel for his patient, occupied her.—But she never spoke, her voice was never once heard to articulate, that evening.—When the servants came, it was the same thing—she made signs with the rapidity of lightning — she obeyed directions with the speed, dexterity, and silence of some unearthly being.—She

did not shed one tear, she did not utter even a groan . . . .

The apothecary came, the physician was sent for—the blood continued to well away— . . . . Once or twice as she looked at him, the passionate wringing of her hands gave signal of the unutterable despair that was fast gaining upon her.

Once she hastily bent down—she kissed his forehead—once she turned herself from the bed and groaned—oh! how bitterly—Often did she look into Gerald's eyes—those eyes from which she had been wont to draw comfort and assurance—but the grave look of anxiety with which they now met hers,—the depth of sympathy she read there, seemed to tell her how it was—to prepare her for what must come.

The Earl was dining out with the Countess that day, and had not yet returned—so the room was only filled by the governesses, the medical men, and the domestics.

Lord Canham seemed for some time anxious, and very impatient that the bleeding should be stopped; but when all endeavours proved ineffectual, and life seemed ebbing fast away, he appeared to resign and to compose himself.

He stretched out his hand with difficulty, and laid hold of his Clarinda's.

She bent down on her knees by his side—the pressure of his hand—the calm, fond, expression of his mournful eyes, arrested and composed her.—She saw how it must be—

She sank down, and buried her fair face upon his breast, now all covered with blood, which stained her long pale tresses; but she quickly rose again, kneeled down,—put her other arm and hand under his pillow and under his head, and remained still and composed while he rested on her bosom.

And on that faithful bosom it was given him to die!

He died—but not without a sign—his last look, speechless as he was, reminded her of all they had thought, and read, and hoped together.—It told her that, at this hour, those hopes assumed the force of realities—it told her to wait and to be patient.

"To our *Father*,"—he just articulated a short time before he closed his eyes....

She sat still a short time, looking petrified and bewildered—when, on a motion made by some of the bystanders, she hastily arose, and stood gazing intently upon him—then the truth seemed to rush upon her; and, stretch-

ing out her arms, she flung herself upon the body, and fainted away ....

The tears streamed in torrents down the faces of all present; servants, governesses, the nurse, the doctor, the apothecary, were weeping bitterly—the drops fell fast from Gerald's eyes upon the helpless form over which he bent—the old man stood on the other side and sobbed aloud —

Such was the scene, when the Earl and the young Countess, who had been hastily summoned, entered the chamber. The father walked up to the bedside — one look was enough ! .... he turned away, and plugging his handkerchief into his eyes, went weeping down stairs.

The Countess saw only one object—it was Gerald weeping over her now insensible sister.—He had lifted her up in his arms—she was laid across his lap like a child, and he was endeavouring to restore animation—he did not even look up when she entered.

She turned away, sick with envy.—She thought that she too could have with pleasure died, once to have been supported so.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a fine April morning—a slight frost had just crisped the air, but the sun was warm and cheering—the trees were beginning to assume their first lively tints of green—the air was still. All calm, silent, peaceful, as a Sabbath-day—save that at intervals, the deep tolling of the church bell struck mournfully upon the ear.

It was the day of Canham's funeral—

The church lay within a few paces of the house.

The bell had ceased to toll—the ceremony was now over; and that composure was restored to the household, which usually follows the excitement and exhaustion of such a day.

The whole had been performed in the most quiet and unostentatious manner. The poor old Earl, at last thoroughly bowed down and heart-broken, by a misfortune which he had never allowed himself to anticipate, was

in no spirit now to indulge his childish love of pomp and display.

All had been arranged as a matter of course—nobody seemed exactly to know by whom .... The family alone, including tutors, governesses, and domestics—Gerald, and the old man—followed the sobbing father, as they bore the body of his only son to the grave.

Wrapped in a long crape cloak that covered her from head to foot—her face scarcely visible—Clarinda had been there—following her beautiful sister—for even she might have been seen bending, mute and mournful, over the grave — to see dust returned to dust—and ashes to ashes—

The ceremony over, Clarinda retired before the rest separated ; and went back to her own room almost unobserved.

The Countess laid her beautiful hand on Gerald's arm, and sobbing, with her white handkerchief to her eyes—slowly paced along the walk which led from the church to the house. There was a deviation from this walk —a narrow path, which led into a thick shrubbery, and from thence to the most retired part of the woods — and instead of going with the rest, she turned this way;

still leaning upon Gerald's arm and weeping.

Never had she seemed so lovely; .... her dark garments rendered her beauty more softly luminous—the melancholy and languor of her deportment, made her appear inexpressibly interesting.

She continued to walk down this retired path for some time in silence, till they came to a small spot in the very heart of the deepest overhanging shades; where the gravel walk widened into a sort of terrace. The holly, the mountain ash, the hazel, the young birches, here made a screen impenetrable; while the magnificent oaks, pines, and beeches, cast wide their overspreading arms so as nearly to obscure the sky. It was afternoon; the birds were singing low and interruptedly in the branches; every thing else in this solitude was profoundly still;—a rustling leaf or a branch, shaken by the passing squirrel, gave silence from time to time—a tongue—only to render it more impressively silent.

Leaning on his arm, she continued pensively to walk up and down this little terrace, her eyes bent upon the earth. She seemed musing upon something she had to

say; and so deeply intent, that even the presence of her companion appeared almost unheeded. At last, in a low sweet tone, her thoughts took words, and she began:—

"Yes, death is an awful thing.—How deep a silence, how drear!—Dust to dust—awful leveller!.... What a vain, painted world of shadows does all seem to me now! I feel as if everything were changed within me.—Yes, Gerald—rank, beauty, fortune, pride, all sink into the earth, as in the scene that we have just gone through! What is there in this world, so soon to be ended in death,—what is there worth heeding—caring for—thinking of?" ....

He could only press the arm he held, gently to his breast.

"Do you feel as I do?" said she, lifting up her eyes to his face, "Do you feel as I do the force of this grand leveller?"

"I have ever thought of the distinctions of which you speak as merely transitory, painted shadows," said he.

"Your soul is generous!—To you, they must indeed seem shadows.—With me, till this day, they have been the first of realities .... Now there seems nothing real in this world but death."

"The *great* reality!" said he.

"And yet," and her eyes again were bent to her feet, and the arm he held trembled slightly, "and yet, Gerald—" . . . .

It was the second time she had called him Gerald; his heart beat, and the slightest sensible possible pressure of her arm against his bosom just indicated his feelings.

"And yet—and yet, Gerald—in this vain world of shadows, in this empty, inflated bubble which we call life — there is *one* thing . . . . Oh! Gerald," and again her eyes sought his, "There is that which is stronger than death, and deeper than the grave . . . . there is—there is —"

His eyes were bent upon her—bent down upon her—there was a flood of tenderness pouring down upon her. Yet he did not speak . . . . Again she looked up; it was as if imploringly this time that he should say something—one word—one little word only. Her eye met his, and hers sank beneath it, and her face was covered with blushes. They walked in silence up and down two or three times. At last she gave a deep sigh, and said,

"I see you will not understand me."

Still he was silent.

She impatiently added,—"I called you generous just now—I retract the term.... Cruel and ungenerous you are, to the last degree, to torture my feelings in this manner," and she hastily withdrew her arm, and walking to the rustic seat, sat down. He followed, and he fell down before her.

"Say, rather, angel!—Sweetest and most adored of angels!.... virtuous and heroic beyond the power of humanity—"

"You love me, then?"

"I worship, I adore you!"

A sharp cry as of some small animal in the fang of a beast of prey rang through the bushes. He started at the interruption; it was fortunate, it gave him a moment's time to recollect himself; he rose instantly from his knees, and stood before her; and after a short struggle with himself, he went on,—

"I had hoped, and I had resolved to bury this secret in the grave with me—this day—this evening—this moment—oh, where am I losing myself? Oh, desperate temptation!" said he wildly. "Thus let me tear myself away!"—and he turned to leave her.

The scene which ensued we shall not describe, nor dwell upon the humiliating pic-

ture of a woman, in defiance of all the ties of duty,—urging the offer of her hand upon one, whom every motive of honour and conscience; her father's confidence and his own position, commanded her to reject,—nor shall we paint the struggles to suppress a fatal passion on one side—nor the fruitless endeavours to overcome a virtuous resolution of immediate and irrevocable separation, upon the other —

It is enough! Two hours after the Countess was entering her own room, shutting and bolting the door in Madame's face; and Gerald, in his, was packing up a small portmanteau; his face flushed, his hair disordered, his eye bloodshot, his hands trembling.

When this was done, and having pulled the straps together in order to buckle them, with a fierce violence that had almost torn them asunder, he had flung his portmanteau impatiently on the floor,—he began to pace the room with hurried steps; passing his hand hastily over his brow, sweeping away the dark masses of his dishevelled hair. Suddenly he seemed to have taken his resolution; and sitting down to his writing-table, wrote thus:

"MY LORD,

"An imperative call of duty to my mother obliges me, with whatever reluctance, thus unexpectedly to resign the situation with which you have honoured me.—I fear that indispensable obligations will forbid me to entertain any prospect of resuming it.—I beg you to excuse me for this hasty determination; trusting that you will believe, that nothing but a necessity the most stringent, should have compelled me to an act of so much apparent caprice and inconsistency."

He had the word ingratitude on his lips, but he could not, and he would not write it, He owed no gratitude to the Earl,—were all known, the Earl might be in debt in that article to him. He was in an agitated, proud, indignant humour; angry with the Earl, the world, and himself; and this was the civillest apology he found himself able to make for his extraordinary behaviour.

He was still walking up and down the room endeavouring to compose himself, when a slight tap was heard at the door.

"Who's there?" cried Gerald, somewhat impatiently.

"I," said a thin, trembling voice.

"Oh, Mr. Green, is it you?"—and he flung the door open immediately.

"What is this?"—said the old man, tottering feebly in. He had, indeed, become very feeble;—tears, and he had shed many, make sad havoc with old age; the tear forgot as soon as shed is not for them: their tears are wrung hardly from them, and they weep their life-blood.

"Here is a sad to do; all your drawers tumbled out upon the floor and empty—and your portmanteau . . . . . What is all this about, good Mr. James?"

"Only that I must leave you."

"Leave us!—Father of Heaven! What is to become of us?"—he cried, aghast. "You are not going to leave us?"—He went on—"You can't be going to leave us, good Mr. Gerald? What are the poor child and I to do without you? . . . Nay, nay, you won't go now—only say you won't go?—I was just coming to fetch you."

"Fetch me for what?" my good old friend."

"Oh, to the poor child.—I 've been sitting with her all the afternoon; but she is so dreary and so woe-begone, and I cry so,—. . .

I 'm grown so foolish . . ." and he cried again as he spoke, "and I can't say anything comforting,—I can't think of anything comforting,—and, poor thing, she is so dreary. She's there sitting in the great dark library, all by herself—on that chair he used to sit upon at lessons—and her poor head is resting upon her arms, and her arms are over his copy-book,—only think, it lies there open, just as he left it that day,—and she has been looking it over, and she seems going stupid . . . and I am so stupid . . . ." said he, wearily and helplessly.

"I will go down," said Gerald, and he went down.

And there, indeed, in that large library she was. She was sitting on Canham's chair, and his open copy-book lay upon the table, and on it her arms were resting, and her head was buried in them and under her long pale hair; but she was not silent, she was groaning as if her heart would break.

His whole heart was melted at this piteous scene; he hastily went up to her, and endeavoured gently to raise her head. She started, rose from her chair,—looked up, spread out her arms—cried aloud, fell upon his bosom—and burst into a passion of tears.

Long did she weep, plenteously and copiously flowed the long-restrained tears; he comforting her, as a brother might comfort a little sorrowing sister, soothing her with the softest words and the gentlest endearments.

At last, with an air of innocence the most unconscious, she disengaged herself from his arm, her full heart relieved by weeping; and drying her eyes, and looking up in his face, as to a superior being, she said, in reply to his consolations.

"Yes, dear Mr. James, teach me to be comforted;—teach me to be quiet and patient;—we must bear with fortitude and composure,—must we not? Did you not use to tell me so?"

"And we must trust in God . . . ." said the old man, his eyes twinkling with tears.

"Our *Father!*—Yes, dear old man, I can and I do.—It has pleased Him to strengthen me very much,—I have been venturing to ask him for it;—I am a poor little creature, but we must all do our best. We must not despair . . ." with a melancholy smile. "Tomorrow, dear Mr. James, I mean to begin my lessons again.—He was so glad that I should have those lessons . . . . but we will

talk less of the philosophers, and more of the kind Master, this time."

Gerald's feelings were almost insupportably painful.

"Nay," she said, looking up; "will you not encourage me?—Will you not help me?—Am I naughty, then?"

"Alas! alas!" groaned the old man.

"What new misfortune?" asked she.

"Oh, you never—never—can do it," said the old botanist.

"Do what? Do what?—What is the matter?"

"Alas! alas!" groaned Gerald; "dear Lady Clarinda, this world is full of trials, errors, disappointments;—your lessons, sweet Lady Clarinda .... I am not worthy to give them. This dear, good old man will supply my place."

She looked affectionately at the old man, but she turned to Gerald and said, "But you will teach me too?"

"Alas! it must not be."

"And why? Why must it not be? Indeed, Mr. James, I never thought to tax you with unkindness, but this does seem to me *very* unkind .... Do forgive me ...."

"Cruelly unkind," said the old man;—"Wickedly unkind just at this moment!"

"My dear Lady Clarinda," said Gerald, taking her hand, "you know still better than I know, that duties *must* be done."

"I do not understand you," said she anxiously.

"A duty.—The most imperious of duties, compels me to leave you.—I must go home to-morrow."

"And when will you come back?"

"Never—"

Her head sank upon her bosom, she closed her eyes, fell forward, and would have fallen to the floor, but the old man caught her.

"You have killed her," he said.—"I knew you would.—Lie still my snow-drop;—go to thy Brother, my pretty lamb; go to the good Shepherd, who carrieth the lambs in his bosom . . . There is nothing left for thee here, —Sweet, broken lily! they shall put that upon thy tomb,—Snapped, at once asunder . . . a pretty device . . ."

"Good Heavens! old man, how you dote!" cried Gerald, pushing him angrily aside; "She can't,—she shan't be dead . . . . Pooh! nonsense," as the bosom heaved with a deep sigh, "you foolish, foolish old man, how you frightened me!"—

She was not, indeed, dead, but she shook

and trembled in every limb; after the shock she had received.

"I will go to bed," said she.—"Call Mary, and carry me up-stairs."

The sweet, rosy-cheeked, blue-eyed, cheerful Mary appeared; her merry eyes were this day red with crying, but when Mary appeared, it was as when the sun bursts through a cloud. She took her poor young mistress in her arms, laid her head against her honest heart, soothed her like a little child, and said,

"Bless me! she had better go to her bed. Come to bed, Lady Clarinda, that is the best place for you, after such a day.—Bless you, Mr. James! help me to carry her up stairs; she can't stand—and we shall have her all bad again."

He took her in his arms, and she once more laid her head confidingly upon his breast.

"Let me see you before you go away to-morrow.—Do let me do that—I cannot bear not to bid farewell," whispered she softly.

Gerald gave the desired promise—resigned her to the loving Mary, and then, spiritless, and objectless; jaded with contradictory feelings; disgusted with the present, and hopeless for the future, he flung himself upon his own bed, and dosed till morning.

CHAPTER XV.

But there had been a secret witness of this last scene. This interview had not escaped the jealous ear of the Countess.

Smarting under the repulse she had received—agitated by the restless hopes of one who will not and who cannot abandon a favourite project, she had wandered about the house, and up and down the long intricate passages, with a faint expectation, not, indeed, confessed to herself, that she should somewhere or other meet him again.

At length she found herself once more near that fatal library—that scene where secret passion had first taken possession of her heart—she had seen Gerald with Mr. Green go towards the place, she had followed at a distance; her hand was upon the lock of the door, when she heard voices; she paused and listened, and little of what passed had escaped her.

She was but too ready to believe her sis-

ter, as much the slave of passion as herself. We form our judgments of human nature rather by our experience of what passes in our own hearts, than by observation upon the characters and actions of others.

Ignorant of what the sacred name of duty even meant; victim herself of a passion which had triumphed over delicacy, pride and female reserve; governed habitually by selfishness or temper — how could she understand the purity, goodness, and generosity of her sister's heart?

Far less could she, who had trampled, in the vehemence of her feelings, upon all those barriers, which ought to protect her sex, attribute the virtuous refusal of Gerald to accept her hand,—a hand which he knew it ought never to have been within his power to reject,—to those really honourable, and virtuous principles which had actuated him.

She had not even a comprehension of such things; she looked around for motives more congenial to her own experience, and she thought she had found them.

She returned, raging with jealousy, to her own chamber;—her soul filled with purposes of revenge. With what a storm of bitter

reproaches would she, on the following day, overwhelm him! How would she expose the puritanical subterfuges, the cowardly, hypocritical pretences of honour and conscience, which he had assumed—while, forsooth, he was abusing the Earl's confidence all the time,—by endeavouring to tamper with the affections of a child so much younger and more inexperienced than herself! Concealing the contemptuous rejection of her own hand, under a vain mask of duty and principle—while he had been secretly stealing the heart of her childish younger sister!

The absurd inconsistencies of such an accusation never struck her for a moment; for when do the jealous reason? . . . .

What a night did this violent creature pass! Now hastily pacing and repacing her chamber, her whole soul burning with the fiercest indignation—now sunk upon her sofa, abandoned to bitter and fruitless tears!

Madame had entered the room, as was her custom, before she went to bed, to administer the evening dose of gossip and flattery; but she had abruptly repulsed her, and had driven her violently and contemptuously away, bidding her let her alone, and have done with her nonsense, unless she could

spice her flummery with a grain of something a little more like truth.

The poor maid suffered next, when she came to attend upon her. Nothing could she do but what was wrong; until after a few vain attempts, the irritation of the young lady seemed to burst all bounds; and tearing her nightcap from the abigail's trembling hand, she flung it on the toilet-table, and bade her, furiously, get away to bed, and trouble her no longer.

The maid hastily quitted the room, leaving her mistress alone;—alone, to the torments of her unbridled passions, all raging and at war!

If such was the anguish of the unhappy Countess, even under the prospect of meeting once more within a few hours the object of her passion; the violence of her mortification and disappointment may be conceived, when, the next morning, she found that he was gone—Gone—for ever!

Her agonies may be conceived, at least by those who know what it is to be suddenly separated from the object of a violent, but secret and unavowed sentiment—That dark desolation of the heart—that dreary aching void—that irritating distaste of what

remains, when the sun that gave brightness to existence has sunk for ever!—Feelings how rankling, how intolerable . . . how difficult, even for the best to endure with patience! What were they, raging uncontrolled, in that undisciplined heart!

She had spent the night, as has been said, in a state of the most desperate excitement; the intervals of distracted feeling filled by ten thousand wild plans—now she was kneeling at his feet, again endeavouring to soften his insensibility to pity—now revenging herself upon his scorn by uttering the bitterest sarcasms—now she fancied him bathing her hand with repentant tears—now she beheld him, as in the wood, tearing himself desperately away.

She never closed her eyes that night; and with the first dawn, she left her room, and went down into the library, where she knew that he always passed an hour or two before breakfast.

The large room was silent and deserted, and the distant corners were still darkened by the uncertain morning twilight; the books and papers were lying about in the confusion of business—she did not remark that any were missing.

She walked up and down the library, filled with her own thoughts, her eyes turning perpetually towards the door, in the hopes that he would enter.

But he entered not.

She became irritated—impatient . . . She went to the window; her hot, trembling hands fidgeted at the bolt—with difficulty she undid it, flung up the sash and looked out.

It was a grey, hazy morning; the dew lay upon the innumerable gossamer webs that were hanging upon the green branches; the little birds were creeping about at their usual morning business, but not a sound was to be heard, except that once she thought she heard a door shut softly above stairs.

He was coming down then—Was it not his step that she heard?—How her heart fluttered—Was it he? . . . No—all was silent.

Presently she heard the sound of a horse's rapid hoof at a distance, it seemed to be leaving the stable yard—It was quite distinctly heard, the morning was at present so profoundly still—She listened—the sound retreated—stopped—was renewed . . . and the silence of the early morning was restored.

A doubt—a terror—a sort of cold sweat—a horror as of a great darkness fell upon her.

She was about to return into her own room, when the door opened—she started, but it was only Mary.

"What are you coming here for, pray?" cried she, rudely.

"Please, my lady, I am only come to fetch...."

"Well, take what you will—and get away."

"Now the house is stirring," thought she, "he will soon be here."

Mary looked among the papers that lay upon the table.

The Countess grew more and more impatient.

"What can you be looking for?" cried she, stamping with her foot, "How dare you disturb me in this manner."

"It is for a book of Mr. James's."

"And what business have you with Mr. James's books? I beg to know."

"Oh, please my lady, he left it for my young lady, and she told me to come and look for it, and...."

"Well, well,—your mistress may wait—He can look for it himself when he comes down."

"Comes down!—Law, my lady, he's been gone this half hour."

"Gone!"...

"Yes, my lady, didn't you know that? He took leave of my Lady Clarinda just now, —and he bade her not cry, but read the book he had left."

"Took leave!—What, in her bed room?"

"No, my lady," said Mary tartly, "that's not *our* way—in her dressing closet."

"Good Heavens!" cried she, kindling with rage and the bitterest jealousy, "He's gone!—and she has seen him!—Hypocrite!—deceiver!—insinuating, hateful hypocrite!"

And up stairs she flew, and burst open the door of the room where sat the weeping Clarinda.

Clarinda was sitting, wrapped in a large shawl, weeping quietly and patiently. She had begun to learn how right it was to subdue herself; and she was endeavouring to control her feelings as he had besought her to do, and to submit with resignation and fortitude to all her trials.

She lifted up her head as her sister burst into the room, and was going to meet her affectionately, but started back

in terror at the expression of her countenance.

The scene which ensued will, I hope, and I believe, be thought incredible by the most of my readers. Many, I trust, have never been so unhappy as to witness how savage human nature can become, when that human nature has been restrained by no higher motive than conventional decency, and such conventional restraints have altogether given way.

"Hell *has* no fury like a woman scorned."

Let us pause upon this awful spectacle of a being totally forsaken and delivered up to herself—let us pause in trembling—this we might, too many of us have been, if left to the unchastened violence of our own passions.

The effect upon her own heart was worse than the deed.

It is true that she did feel ashamed when the violence of her rage had abated, and she stood exhausted by the almost delirious intemperance into which she had been betrayed, but no compunction visited her heart . . . She stood there a prey to, perhaps, the worst feeling that can possess a human being . . . self-reproach without self-humiliation —

self abasement without remorse.—She only felt the more irritated against the wounded victim of her violence, because she had been the object of a storm of passion, of which she was now beginning to be ashamed.

Clarinda had a proud, and, on occasion, a sullen spirit, too.

She lifted her eye upon her sister, as she slowly left the room—one look was enough —from that time the Countess hated her.

There are feelings which set at defiance both reason and philosophy; those of a generous, susceptible spirit, outraged by indignity are of these..

Wo to the man by whom the offence cometh!

Wo to the unhappy bleeding heart by which it is received!

Wo to the man who dares to cast an indignity upon a fellow-creature, be he whom he may!—

There is that even in the most degraded, a something still precious which indignity may destroy.

Clarinda had risen from the ground as her sister's fury abated, and moving slowly and painfully she had quitted the room.—Her

heart was swelling — but her face betrayed little emotion.—She looked cold and resolute, undaunted, obstinate, and determined.

She was at that moment abjuring every tie that bound her to her own; — she was renouncing rank, fortune, family, and place. — She was calling herself a poor, degraded, beaten, insulted creature; — the sport and mockery of all whom she should have loved; —a servant of servants, and a slave of slaves. —She was looking round upon a world in which she found herself a solitary—upon a world to her, all empty, desolate, dark, and drear.—

The proud sister looked after her defaced and broken figure;—and did she not pity? No; not even then;—she hated her the more:—she felt CRUEL.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE next, and the last, persecution which this unhappy young creature was doomed to endure completed the melancholy history, and precipitated her upon her fate.

She was exposed to a persecution, perhaps the most intolerable of all, to one with feelings so pure—with a delicacy almost more than common even to the sweet reserve of her lovely sex and age—she was exposed to the addresses of a detested suitor; and that suitor a bad and unprincipled man.

It may be remembered, that a Sir Charles Selwyn was mentioned among the frequenters of the castle in happier days; and that he shewed sundry little symptoms of entertaining an admiration for the young Lady Clarinda; which evidences of admiration were always met on her part by nothing but repulses—repulses which seemed rather to amuse than discourage her admirer.

It was certainly true, that this veteran in the ways of the world, though insensible to the extraordinary beauty of the Countess, had taken a fancy to her delicate younger sister.

His manner of preferring his suit had been such, as to be anything but pleasing to the young lady;—and one of those aversions,—vehement, apparently, beyond the occasion,—which girls of that age often feel for any one who perseveres in pressing upon them an obnoxious passion, had arisen within her breast.

The old botanist, her only friend and confidant in this matter, had encouraged this dislike by every means in his power;—he happened to have had opportunities of knowing Sir Charles well; and his very soul revolted at the idea of uniting so much purity, youth, and innocence, to a man so worthless. The illness and death of Lord Canham had for some time put an end to Sir Charles's pretensions, but he now prepared himself seriously to pay his addresses:—indeed, there was no reason against, and a great many reasons why, in strict conformity with his worldly interests, he should indulge his inclination.

Though dependent upon the Earl, and without her sister's claims to rank and consequence, still her father was rich; and the death of Canham would enable him, no doubt, to give his second daughter a portion which might render her an eligible match for the highest. Sir Charles, therefore, might safely indulge his fancy, without interfering with his interests, on which, man of pleasure, as he professed himself to be, he always kept a keen eye. And his fancy, thus indulged, began soon to take the form of a passion; and he believed, or *thought* he believed, that his happiness was very deeply involved in the event which he now ardently desired.

He, however, troubled himself so little as to the way in which the Lady Clarinda might regard his intentions, that he had not even intimated them to her, when he laid his proposals before the Earl. Perhaps, as was still a good deal the way of thinking in that day, he considered daughters as mere family possessions, to be disposed of at the good pleasure of their fathers;—or, perhaps, he considered himself so irresistible, that no young lady could decline his addresses, or resist his suit.

Be that as it may, he laid his proposals before the Earl.

We have almost lost sight of the poor old Earl, who since the death of his son had become quite a changed being. The weak old man, who, negligent, and coarse, and hasty and violent, as he was, had not, after all, a bad heart—had been quite overwhelmed, when that event actually took place, which he had taken little pains to avert, because he would never allow himself to anticipate it.

The very feebleness of character, which made him so careless and indifferent under an impending misfortune, rendered it quite impossible for him to offer the slightest resistance to the blow; when that misfortune actually fell—he sank under it.

A sort of dull, stupid melancholy seemed to invade all his faculties;—his busy animation—his cheerful activity—his warm interest in the ten thousand trifles of his trifling life were over. It is true he still frequented his museum and surrounded himself with his shells, his stones, his tools, and his soapsuds, but alas! how was all changed!

Leaning back in his chair—his beloved labours suspended—he might now be seen,

his arms hanging listlessly by his side, lost in a melancholy reverie. Then, if his servant happened to speak or to make any little noise in the chamber, he would start as if detected in doing something wrong, and suddenly recollecting himself, scrub away as though life depended upon his efforts, his tears, all unobserved by himself, falling thick and fast over his hands, into the washing-basin.

His faculties were rapidly decaying.

It may be imagined how much the power and influence of the imperious elder sister increased under this state of things. The Earl, who had always been rather afraid of her, and had ever cherished a very high opinion of her abilities, now yielded himself entirely to her power. The whole government of the house and household, including the Earl himself, and his unhappy younger daughter, fell into her hands.

So, when Sir Charles had made his proposals, the elder daughter was immediately consulted; and it was agreed between her and her father that they could not do better than accept them.

The Earl was easily persuaded by the Countess to believe that Clarinda would

never be safe till she was married. Those vile and most unjustifiable insinuations against a conduct which had been all purity, and only a too unsuspecting innocence, were renewed, and the abhorred name of the villain Reynolds was again made use of.* A tendency to form other attachments, equally beneath her rank, was also most wickedly and falsely insinuated. The allusions were cautious and distant, however, for the young lady's own conscience whispered her not to go very near the wind in that quarter.

Now, why was the Countess so anxious to force her sister into a match, which she believed would be distasteful to her? . . . Her feelings were complicated, and contradictory enough in appearance, but they had one root, —Jealousy!

* On the subject of those frequent allusions to the name of Reynolds, I have thought it unnecessary to make any explanation; I hope all will have too well understood the character of Clarinda not to believe them to be false and infamous. The truth was, that the dishonourable young man had endeavoured to take advantage of his situation, and to obtain an influence over his young pupil's heart, in the hope of clandestinely obtaining her hand—a purpose which had filled her, when she discovered it, with disgust and indignation; but which the governess and her elder sister always persisted in representing her as having encouraged; hence the vehement feelings of resentment excited in her mind by the slightest allusion to the subject.

She had at first hardly known whether to be affronted or not at the avowed preference Sir Charles shewed for her sister; and her jealous feelings of mortified pride had only been allayed, by perceiving how little his attentions gave pleasure to Clarinda.

The events of the last few weeks had given a fresh turn to her thoughts—her indifference and dislike to her sister had arisen to positive aversion; her incipient jealousy had become a bitter and intolerable passion. The presence of Clarinda was wormwood to her soul. The gentle ways—the quiet dignity—the placid, yet effectual resistance she opposed to her tyranny—the persevering industry with which she pursued the studies commenced by Gerald—all that, which the Countess knew, could he have witnessed it, would have excited his most fervent admiration; became a galling irritation to her spirit, which she found it impossible to bear.

To get rid of her on any terms—*even to make her happy*—would have been desirable: to get rid of her, and *not to make her happy*—the opportunity was irresistible.

Feelings such as I describe never take words, and, seldom take even the form of a purpose, in the human breast. There are

few human beings so wicked as coolly to plan wickedness; but how many! . . . what thousands and thousands! suffer themselves to be influenced by feelings, which in the most secret chambers of their hearts they would blush to avow.

It was determined to accept: Sir Charles was accepted, and Clarinda was summoned to the conclave in the Earl's apartment.

She entered, somewhat fluttered and surprised, by the hasty and unusual summons. The Earl was sitting in his elbow chair; something of the dignity of a father on such an occasion visible in his appearance. He was not insensible to the feelings of that moment of mingled pride and regret, when a father bestows his daughter upon another; and she leaves the shelter of his side for ever.

He did not think much about the duties or the tendernesses of the position, but he felt its pride and its importance, and he looked very erect, and somewhat grand, as his young daughter — much improved in beauty and appearance since she was first presented to the reader—but looking hurried and fluttered, entered the room, and made a curtsy to her father.

The Countess stood behind his chair; her cold eye fixed like that of a basilisk upon her sister as she entered: Sir Charles, dressed in a fashionable undress, his elegant limbs crossed one over the other, his arm resting upon the chimney-piece, leaned against the wall in an easy lounging sort of manner.

"Clarinda," said the Earl, "come forward—Take that chair."

On which Sir Charles less languidly moved a few paces, pushed the chair to her, and resumed his position.

The Earl then, with a pompous imbecility of wordy matter, laid the subject in question before her; or rather gave her, after much circumlocution, to understand, that Sir Charles had made proposals for her, and that he had accepted them.

Clarinda was astounded. At first she could hardly believe her senses; she started from her chair, and stood looking this way and that, like a startled fawn, surprised in its thicket, and dubious of escape—its large eyes glancing from side to side, too much terrified even to attempt flight. Sir Charles thought she looked irresistibly bewitching with this wild and fearful expression, for

which he had not the slightest feeling of pity or compassion.

There was an interval of silence.

"Well, my lady?" — said the Earl at length.

She had in a short time collected her spirits; and without sitting down in the offered chair, she briefly, and with extremely little ceremony, rejected the proposal; and turned quietly away to leave the room.

The Earl was thunderstruck for a moment at her audacity, and sat speechless, staring in his chair; while Sir Charles, gently following her, laid hold of her arm, and endeavoured to lead her back again with an affected, "Nay, but faith, you cannot intend to be so *very* cruel?"

"But she shook him impatiently off, and laid her hand upon the lock of the door.

The Earl had by this time recovered his senses, and had worked himself into one of his most furious passions: he roared after her a tremendous oath, and ordered her to come back to her place, and explain what she meant by her obstinacy and impertinence.

She returned as he commanded — Sir Charles offering his hand, which she rejected

with a motion of disgust, and stood before her enraged father.

Her heart was beating fast, but it was beginning to harden, and her eye was assuming that dogged and determined expression to which it had of late been a stranger.

Her intellect had ripened greatly during the twelve months that had elapsed since she had first been presented to Gerald; yet though her character had been softened, and all her good and generous qualities called into activity, the fearless self-dependence, which formed the foundation of it, had been rendered only more consistent by the change. She had become more fearful of doing wrong, but had acquired a still greater force of determination in adhering to what she thought to be right.

The warnings of her friend Mr. Green as to the character of Sir Charles had decided her upon the point in question. With her simple view of things, she never could understand that a father could possess the right to throw away the whole life and happiness of another, merely because he was a father. . . . She had learned the duty of a child, and understood it far better than she had ever done before, under the teachings

of Gerald; but here — for her — obedience and duty ceased. . . . and the first nervous tremour overcome, irresolution and fear were at an end. She stood before her father looking very pale—but steady, cool and determined.

"And why—and why—and why—" vociferated the Earl, swearing dreadfully, "What reason on earth can you offer, for this insolent refusal?"

"What reason on earth?" softly echoed Sir Charles. She eyed her suitor from head to foot, with her old sarcastic air, but made no answer.

"Speak, you obstinate fool! Can't you speak?" cried the passionate father.

"I have spoken,"—was the only reply.

"Oh, but you will not, you cannot be so cruel!" Despair—flames—darts. All the nonsense of love-making in those days, began to flow from Sir Charles's experienced lips. He really seemed beginning to warm with the subject, for he thought her irresistibly charming now that he found there would be some difficulty in winning her; though of his final success, it never entered into his head to entertain a doubt.

She deigned not to take the slightest no-

tice of what he said, but continued to stand before her father, listening to his torrent of words with what he thought the most insolent intrepidity.

"Can you indeed persist, Sir Charles!—in spite of all this confounded impertinence," at length he cried, as Sir Charles continued pouring his entreaties and protestations into her cold, insensible ear; "Can you persevere in your suit?"

"Ay,"—said the heartless man of the world, stimulated to the highest degree by this novel behaviour, "Nothing shall divert me from my present purpose, till my charmer is all my own."—

"Then take her,"—said the Earl, suddenly snatching her hand and placing it in his. "Take her if you think her worth the having. . . . and may the d—l make you as glad to have her—as I am to get rid of her." . . .

She looked up in her father's face at this speech,—her bosom heaved—and the large slow tears welled up, at last, into her eyes, and down in one or two big drops upon her cheek—Her father!—Yes indeed it was her father. . . . She thought of Canham—the thought for the moment overpowered her—her hand sank powerless in his, as he placed

it in that of Sir Charles's, who, grasping it passionately, professed to believe himself to be the happiest man alive.

But her thoughts were far away. . . . they had fled to other scenes.—While Sir Charles was pouring out all his soul in vehement protestations—that longing for a father—for a parent's love, which she had shared with her unhappy brother—that utter desolation of a child fatherless with a living father—all their old regrets—their old conversations rose to her mind. She was there. . . . as the sinking gladiator, in the undying verse of Byron, forgets the sword, the amphitheatre, the thronging spectators,—and is transported to his children, and their Thracian mother once more.

She stood for a few moments, with strange, uncertain feelings flitting over her bewildered face, and did not even withdraw her hand —she was recovered by the action of Sir Charles pressing it passionately to his lips. . . . . She tore it away, but it was too late.—

The whole party concurred in a determination to consider this act of momentary forgetfulness as a tacit consent;—and when she recovered her senses, and hastily withdrawing her hand, immediately left the

room, nothing further was required, but to ratify the engagements between the Earl and her admirer.

The Countess had been a silent witness of this scene. The evident passion of Sir Charles excited some little jealousy, the reluctance of Clarinda some little surprise; however, she varied not in her purpose, by this means to get rid of her—and the most persevering tenacity of purpose was a predominant feature of her character.

When Clarinda had left the room, she could not forbear a little good-natured, (*ill-natured*) raillery to Sir Charles, upon the success of his invincible passion—but the gentleman bore it with the utmost good humour; declaring that he was enchanted with his prospects—that the pleasure of the chase was all in all to him; adding, with an air of fashionable impertinence, "That with his experience of life, there was a novelty, the most exhilarating, in the pursuit of so wild a Galatea."

But he found his Galatea of a different disposition from that which he had been accustomed to attribute to her sex—his blandishments, his flatteries, his enticing lies and subtleties were here without effect—She had

taken her resolution; and she adhered to it with her usual simplicity and firmness.

She had been, for some time, living in a secret contempt of all the wealth and grandeur which surrounded her. Ever since that fatal scene with her sister, her heart had closed to home—where there was no object for her tender affections, and no defence against the cruellest tyranny.—She was beginning to shake off all the associations which bound her to her rank—and was learning to despise the elegant habits of a life, which to her was a life of dreary misery.

Great misery restores the man to nature—it breaks through the restraints of habit and imagination—and levels before its mighty force all the magic entrenchments which confine us within our allotted spheres.

She now took her resolution—nothing on earth should make her the wife of Sir Charles, be the consequences what they would. Her father might renounce,—her sister turn her out of doors to perish,—perish she might and she would—but be his, she would not.

Was there a secret hidden influence which gave force to this obstinate determination?—I know not: all I can say is, that if there were, she was ignorant of it—Her heart

might be treacherous in one point—but her sweet, pure imagination understood it not.

—The persecution continued.—

A history of a persecution such as this would be alike tedious and disgusting. Nothing can be more odious, in fact, than a suit of this nature, carried on in the manner it was.—Nothing more hateful than the part which the lover, the elder sister, the French governess, and the poor weak father himself, played upon this occasion.

The Earl, never possessing much tenderness of feeling, seemed now to have lost it entirely—he was more obstinate, more undiscerning, more irritable and violent, than ever.

The Countess had long become hardened—The French governess was her unprincipled flatterer and abettor in her worst actions.

The proceedings of Sir Charles were no more considerate or kind, than those of the rest.

Clarinda made all the resistance in her power, but she began to feel that more than passive resistance was becoming necessary.—

She looked around for help;—but what help was there?....What could her old friend, the botanist—her only remaining friend—do

for her in this extremity? He could sympathise with her, and cry with her when she cried;—but that was not often.

Sir Charles had the run of the house.—

Long had she succeeded in escaping an interview with him;—but one day she was not successful....

She was seen after this, hurrying up into her own room—her face crimsoned with passion.

She was never seen again.—

She refused to appear at dinner, or to come down when sent for in the evening.

The next morning she was gone.....

She was sought for on all sides,—She was nowhere to be found.

Her room was in its usual order;—her clothes lay in their usual places. Her garden shawl and bonnet, and a small miniature of Canham, alone, were missing.—The library, the halls, the remote chambers, the gardens, the woods—all were searched, and in vain. No one had seen her pass; not a trace of her could be discovered.

The adjacent cottages were searched; the turnpike men on the great roads interrogated. No one answering in the least to her description had been seen.

Then a horrid suspicion fell upon the mind. The ponds were dragged.—To one deep, dark pool, buried in the recesses of the woods, small female footsteps certainly might be traced;—this was dragged several times; but it had been an old chalk pit, and the body, if there, might probably have sunk into a fathomless hole, or have been washed into, and lodged in, the galleries.

The Countess and Madame agreed to send to Gerald's mother; and accordingly a messenger was despatched to the town of Brough, where she was still supposed to reside. He returned with the intelligence that she had been dead some weeks;—that she died suddenly;—that the house and furniture were already sold; and that no one knew what had become of her son.

The fate of the unfortunate Clarinda seemed shrouded in impenetrable darkness.

These scanty fragments were found among her papers; they seemed to afford a slight indication of the state of mind of this unhappy girl, during the last few weeks that had preceded her disappearance:—

"Where shall I turn?—What will become of me?—Father! Sister! what have I

done?—My heart acquits me of the intention. . . . . I have earnestly desired to deserve your kindness.—It is true; I was obstinate, proud, unyielding, ... but he had taught me that it was *so* wrong.—Am I still so *very* unamiable that no one will, or can love me? . . . . .

"Alas! beautiful Anna,—Why did you drive the little Clarinda from your heart?—Ah, sister, can you know how bitter is a sharp unkindness! . . . . And from you!—eldest sister! — beautiful sister! — Mother that should have been! . . . . How desolate and weary I am! 'Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away, and be at rest!' . . . . Ah, Prophet and King! —if such was thy desolation when hated and scorned of all men, what must the poor, feeble Clarinda's be.

"No,—never, — never!—My whole heart abhors it. Oh, there is a sickening abhorrence worse than death!—What! be one with that bad, false man? — Oh, my father! —No, never, never, never! . . . .

"Ah, Canham, Canham! . . . . He answers not. In the dim shadows of that night he rests,—that awful, shuddering darkness! Ah, not again!—Dare I again? . . . . Alas! *he*

taught me that the life which the great Creator gave, was a sacred, holy thing, — a trusted treasure. . . . . 'No, I dare not.' . . . . I will endure,—Yes,—yes, I will, I will endure.

"All is over.—Farewell!—Farewell!—Father, sister, home! . . . — The torrent is too mighty. — I resist no longer. . . . . The unhappy, lost Clarinda sinks beneath the waves.—Ah! let her sink, disappear, and be seen and heard no more!"—

CHAPTER XVII.

This shock, for after all a great shock it was, finished the overthrow of the Earl's intellects. He became a mere moping, crying driveller:—he now, altogether, forsook his museum, the scene of his long-wasted labours. He sat chiefly in his own study, rocking himself to and fro,—the burden of his lamentation being, "Oh, poor children!—Poor children!"—

The care of those who have fallen into a state of this half-fatuity, perhaps requires more humanity, gentleness, and good sense, than that of any charge that can be committed to us. It may be imagined how ill fitted the Countess was to perform so delicate a task. The father who, through his own culpable neglect, had lost two good and pious children, was subjected to the punishment of Lear. He fell into the power of one neither good nor pious, but naturally pitiless, arrogant, and selfish. His infirmi-

ties found with her, no advocate, — there was no sympathy for his helpless sorrow,— no patience with the irritation of his weakness. He was checked and treated as a silly and wilful child might have been,—scolded when wrong, ridiculed when foolish.

Alas! for the second childhood, without the engaging charms of the first! How shall it soften and bewitch the heart to tenderness,—without its innocence, its happy, careless joy? How endure — when tears wrung from those aged eyes fall upon the poor withered heart, ... and fester there? Alas! here is no longer the sweet humility and submission of a child . . . . that happy blindness, that simple faith which make even tyranny appear just, and harshness well deserved. Age revolts, at the impiety of the thraldom, — the poor, enfeebled spirit inwardly resists; and shrinks, with a sort of involuntary horror, from the hand that aims the unnatural blow. . . . .

What the Countess felt on the disappearance of her young sister was never exactly known. Perhaps she did feel; perhaps she might be visited with some wholesome sensations of regret, self-accusation, and remorse,—but if she were, she hardened her

heart against them, and she never, by word or look, gave the slightest indication of pity for Clarinda's unhappy fate. 'So the last state of that man was worse than the first!' —It is certain she, from this time, became much more rigid, harsh, haughty, and exacting to others, than she had ever been before in her worst humours; and she hardened, at last, into a character of unbending pride and severity—a character which, keeping every one at a distance, inspires a sort of indefinable terror, mingled with a certain respect,—a character which is universally feared and obeyed,—often flattered, and almost invariably hated.

Sir Charles received a deep wound in his vanity and in his feelings; he was for a short time the better for it. The sincerity of Clarinda; the genuine truth of a rejection which he had all through attributed to mere childish coquetry, gave him a better opinion of her sex. He lamented bitterly her fate; and detested his own shortsighted fatuity which had driven her upon it.

He went abroad, a saddened and a better man; but the amendment was short. His habits were too fixed in evil to be corrected by any one impression, however deep at the

moment. He was soon lost in the vortex of vice and folly, which at that time constituted the great world—and there we shall leave him.

Mr. Green was not to be seen in his museum at his usual hour on the morning of the Lady Clarinda's disappearance. They looked for him in his own little apartment up stairs, and there he was found in bed, looking very ill and feeble; a pair of very dusty shoes might, by an observant eye, have been seen half hidden under the bed; but there were no observant eyes present to regard them.

When told of the Lady Clarinda's disappearance, he only feebly ejaculated,—"Oh, goodness me!—Oh, patience me!—Only to think of that! — Poor child, poor child!"—and turning round in his bed, and feebly groaning, he hid his face from the light of day.

People were surprised that he did not show more feeling and anxiety upon the occasion; but he seemed too ill and exhausted to be able to pay much attention to anything.

By and by, he endeavoured to get up and dress himself; but he could not get his things on. After many vain endeavours to make his fumbling fingers obey his wishes,

he gave up the vain attempt; went to bed, and covered up his head again. There he lay several days, dozing as it were between sleeping and waking; only roused so far, when any one entered suddenly, as to lift up his head and ask:

"But is there no news of the child,—of the Lady Clarinda?"

The answer was received with a strange sort of sigh; it seemed a sigh almost of satisfaction: perhaps the old man thought she was gone to that better country where he should speedily rejoin her;—there was no knowing what he thought or felt, he said so little. He ate scarcely anything, but he made no complaints; and if he had made complaints, there was nobody now left, to trouble themselves much about him.

In about a fortnight's time he died. They buried him in the family vault, and his coffin lies close by that of Lord Canham.

Rest be to his spirit!

Mary went home to her parents two days after the Lady Clarinda had disappeared, declaring that she hated the very sight of the house, and of everybody belonging to it.... "And couldn't and wouldn't stay there for all the gold of the *Ingies*." She

was not thought to shed so many tears over the fate of her young lady, as might have been expected from the strong attachment she always professed for her. She seemed too indignant to be sorry.

One good thing the Countess did effect: she made a clearance of all the litter of tutors, governesses, chaplain, &c., &c., that had accumulated round the castle under the indolent government of the Earl.

Powel, — Hughes, — all disappeared, except Madame; who retained her place as counsellor, companion, and flatterer. The odious chaplain was turned away; and a grave, sober, divine, recommended by Mr. Poyntz, took that place in the museum and library, which had once been occupied by such earnest and feeling characters.

The firmness, and decision of the Countess's disposition, enabled her to govern better than her poor simple father had done. And, under the direction of Mr. Poyntz, decorum and order began to pervade the family; and to the world in general the improvement appeared most striking.

The Countess began to be very generally respected.

Mr. Poyntz, it is proper to say, had been

absent during the last important period. A threatening of consumption had obliged him, soon after that conversation with Gerald on the terrace, recorded earlier in the book, to visit the Madeiras, and he did not return till some months after his favourite had disappeared. His absence is much to be lamented; it is impossible but, that his influence must have served to protect the unhappy Clarinda,—to restrain the Countess in her unjust persecutions, the Earl in his violence, — and to modify the conduct of all. He came back to lament the fate of one from whom he had hoped so much; and to endeavour so to influence the remaining sister, as that the immense authority and power, now fallen into her hands, should be exercised for the good of those around her.

In this, he in some measure succeeded.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Gerald was living alone in London.

His old grandmother had been dead some time; and the unexpected and sudden death of his mother had plunged him at once into a state of very considerable pecuniary difficulty. Her annuity died with her. On it he had sunk every farthing of the small remnant of his father's property. — His sudden departure from the Castle of Lord Glenmore had prevented his drawing the arrears of his salary; and, as no notice whatsoever, had been taken by the Earl of his farewell letter, he felt an invincible dislike to ask him for the money.

His mother received him with open arms. Thoroughly comprehending and approving the honourable motives which had driven him to retreat; her home and her heart were opened with enthusiasm, to the son in whom she gloried. She was, perhaps, in secret, not sorry to find, that the experiment of

attempting to fill a situation which she so much disliked had totally failed; and, with her usual sanguine ardour of mind, she looked forward with security to his future success, in some path more consonant in her opinion to his worth and abilities.

But again the difficulty returned—Again the question so difficult to answer, must be asked.

What was this to be?—

At present, literature seemed to open the only possible field for enterprise; and it was at length resolved that Gerald should go to London, and endeavour to enter into some engagement with the booksellers, by which he might be enabled to maintain himself. His mother, after some reflection, resolving to break asunder all the ties which bound her to Brough, and to accompany him—so that, out of her own little income, she might provide, at least, a shelter, for her son, until his expectations should be realized.

The preparations for their final departure, afforded some little time for the renewal of that delightful intercourse which subsists between an affectionate son and an intelligent, clever, doting mother,—and in

spite of all his anxieties, and all his regrets, Gerald was not insensible to its charms. — He loved his mother tenderly, reverenced her with all the piety of a son, and the respect due to a wise and faithful friend.

A sort of correspondence had been kept up between him and the old botanist, and he had been informed of what passed at the castle after his departure. But the details were meagre and unsatisfactory — lamentations over the necessity of his departure—hints rather than recitals of unhappiness going on..... Confused matter were the poor old man's epistles altogether —there was nothing much to be made of them.

Gerald bore this interruption of intelligence with more patience than might have been expected; his heart had been wearied and worn out, with the efforts he had made to resist a growing passion—a passion which, once out of the influence of the Countess's enchantments, he found to his surprise to be dying away of itself.—The repose that this feeling produced was almost delicious. For the poor Clarinda, his interest remained tenderly excited—yet, as nothing very much

amiss was reported in the confused epistles of the old man, he comforted himself with hoping that her situation was less uncomfortable,—and that time, as she grew older, must certainly ameliorate it.

So, he gave himself up to the enjoyment of his mother's society, to the peace and happiness of his own home—and to that delightful feeling of independence restored; which has charms inexpressible for those who know what it is to have forfeited it.

Often, as in imagination he wandered over the scenes of the past year, did he marvel at the strange infatuation which had rendered him blind, to the many faults of the Countess—but, disenchanted though he was, he could not conceal from himself, that his heart had received a blow — he was liberated — but he should never love again.—. . . .

So passed the time.

At last the period arrived when they were finally to quit Brough; the preparations for his departure were made — the son and mother took together, their last frugal and sociable supper.

It had been arranged that Gerald should set out first, and prepare the little lodging,

which he had taken in the neighbourhood of Lambeth Palace: Mrs. James remaining a short time behind, to wind up their little worldly affairs; which done, he should return to carry her to their new home.

The mother seemed more tender than ever that night — often did she lay her hand fondly on her son's arm, and stroke it down with a mother's pride. Often did she turn to gaze again, and again, upon his countenance, while he was speaking.

Never had she thought it so beautiful.

"Good night, my son,"—said she at length looking at the old seven-day clock, that ticked in the corner of the little parlour. "It is eleven o'clock, I declare—and, some how or other, I do feel very weary." ....

"Indeed!" cried he, looking at her, "you seem so; how pale you are! You have been working so hard for me all day; packing and repacking my little trunk; and ironing and plaiting that linen, which you thought never could be well enough — *Dear* mother! .... How selfish of me to keep you up so long!—but do go to bed now, and don't get up in the morning to see me off."

"Not get up in the morning!—As if

I should not!" "But, give me your arm now, dear, my son, and take me to my door.".....

"The God of the fatherless help and bless thee, my son,"—

Said she, as she gave him a last embrace —and then turned and entered her room.

The door closed upon her....

He never saw her alive again.

In the morning she was found cold in her bed; in that deep and calm sleep, in which the righteous await the dawning of a better and a brighter day. Or rather, perhaps, we should say,—"Her body had returned to dust; and her spirit to the hands of Him who gave it."

It was now that Gerald first found himself really alone.

They were not few, the tears that he shed over this loved and honoured mother. The most manly heart will melt to childishness, over the dead image of that tender friend, endeared by all the memory of infant years, of boyish errors — of manly griefs—over that breast which responding in sympathy to every want and feeling, entered into our interests with an ardour far surpassing our own; — loving with a

generous liberality of tenderness, which scarcely required a motive, and scarcely asked for a return.

He followed her to the grave with many tears, accompanied by all the old friends of his childhood.

Good Mr. Scribe—worthy Mrs. Harrison, were weeping there; — Mr. Plowden, no longer could lift up his voice to chaunt the psalm, for the little congregation had been long broken up and dispersed; and no new pastor had ever attempted to re-assemble the little flock.

But kind Mr. Lambert consigned her to the dust; and she slept by her husband in the churchyard.

When the ceremony was over, Gerald remained to take a last farewell of the grave of his parents—he then bade farewell to Mr. Lambert, begging that sacred earth might never be disturbed. After which he returned, for the last time, to the house, now no longer his home.

The widow of the last minister being dead. the place was to revert to the trustees.

It had been kept, with its little garden, in undiminished order and beauty; by the active care of Mrs. James, the honeysuckles

and roses still hung over the little porch—the little border of mignionette, under the casement window, smelled sweet as ever—the beds of ranunculus and hyacinths, the borders of narcissus and daffodils, lilies, polyanthus, and all spring flowers, were rich and gay—the apple and pear-trees were bending under their load of blossom—the bee was humming cheerily—the little wren whistling his sweet song.

All was, as it had been, when the Lady Evelyn first entered on that Sabbath morning, into the bosom of that simple paradise; —but the genius of the place was gone. . . .

There, in the parlour, was that couch, on which she had rested; and which had, as some sacred thing, retained its place ever since—There was that corner of the window, where he, a boy, had loved to stand—looking out, on that, to him, enchanting garden; inhaling the perfume of the honeysuckles that flourished over his head, and listening to the gay prattle of her sweet voice, or to his loved father's deep and earnest tones. There was the table still, at which his mother and his grandmother sat—he heard the little click of the old lady's knitting-needles—and saw his mother's nimble needle fly.

He visited every corner of the house,—and then, taking a long and wistful look at the silent and deserted little mansion,—went out, closed the door, and locked it.

He was to sleep that night at good Mr. Scribe's, who had promised to wind up his little affairs for him.—Some sacred relics, the table, the couch, his father's chair—his mother's bed—the books, the writing desk, Mrs. Harrison had promised to keep for him —the rest were to be sold—and the little sum was to be hoarded by Mr. Scribe for his necessary wants and calls—debts there were none to pay.

The next morning he set out for London.

CHAPTER XIX.

Gerald had been living in London some months.

He had found, as all find, who try to make literature a means of subsistence, the greatest difficulty in discovering the open *sesame*, which should enable him to enter the cavern of riches, and take thence his little share of the glittering treasure—If this be difficult in these our golden and liberal days, what was it then ?

Let any one remember Samuel Johnson sleeping upon a bulk. — Gerald, however, thanks to the prudent thrift of Mr. Scribe, had never found himself reduced to such a state of destitution ; and partly, perhaps, owing to his comparative independence, was enabled to enter, at last, into an engagement with an eminent bookseller, to undertake the preparation, with notes, of a new edition of some great and ponderous work.

The labour was dry, and the toil unremitting. It was desirable, on account of the

works of reference to be consulted, that he should be near the library at Lambeth Palace; for the work in hand was a new edition of some of the ancient fathers. He had taken cheap lodgings in a little narrow street, near the palace—and here, in a close, small garret, up three pairs of stairs, did he labour in uncheered, dreary solitude from day to day.

His apartment consisted of a small sitting-room, which looked into a court at the back of the house; a little bed-room, and a very narrow closet, or wardrobe room, upon the stairs, to hold his little property of trunks and clothes.

At the end of a sultry summer's day, he was, one hot evening, sitting in his little close parlour—the day had been most oppressive—and he went to his window gasping for breath; and longing for one mouthful of the sweet air of his native town and hills. How different from his mother's sweet flower-garden!—the humming bees—the warbling wren—the swaying honeysuckles! He looked down into a wretched court, surrounded by old miserable houses—the sooty sparrows were chirping their hard, jarring notes upon the roofs; a sycamore tree, black and forlorn,

in one corner, expiring as it were, like himself, for want of a breath of pure air, in this gross and heavy atmosphere—these were the only objects that broke the dull uniformity of grim, dirty, brick and mortar.

If he looked into his room, what did it present? In place of the bright and cleanly cheerfulness to which his good mother had accustomed him .... a little dark dingy hole, ten feet by ten; furnished with an old bureau, smelling as none can smell but old bureaus in London — a rickety, claw-footed, dirty, mahogany table, on which lay his desk and books;—two old mahogany stiff-backed chairs—a morsel of dirty carpet in the middle of the room; on the chimney-piece a japanned waiter, and two things that were called girandoles — little candlesticks with glass frills, perfectly coated over with dirt and smoke.

This was the best accommodation with which Gerald's now scanty purse could furnish him in the great, expensive city; and he was vexed and annoyed to find, how much he suffered from it. For he was a man of most delicate and susceptible nerves and frame; and do what he would to harden himself against it, still discomfort,—want of fresh

air,—want of cleanliness, delicacy, order,—and instead of these, the presence of everything most abhorrent to his nice perceptions—weighed upon and disturbed his spirits, and affected his health.

He grew pale—his hair assumed a dingy, dusty hue — his hand wasted, and became hot and feverish, his cheek hollow, a dark circle surrounded his eyes.

That his spirits sank who will wonder?—How desolate and alone did he feel himself in this world? Where was that sweet, cheerful home of his childhood?—Where the honoured voices he had so loved to hear?—All silent, lost and gone!

Where was that second home?—Was that then but a dream, that tale of interest and excitement?—Was it all faded, past and gone too? . . . . That beauteous scene — those lordly landscapes—those gilded halls—was all but an illusion?

Those forms of loveliness that floated round him—that glorious vision of youthful, beaming beauty; divine in all the wealth of charms, as the Hebe that poured the nectar of the gods . . . . alas! where and what was she! . . . . That boy — that restless, feeling, interesting boy—where was he? . . . . That

girl, that colourless, delicate, fair, and slender-armed girl—with her long, pale, silken hair—her eye that told so much—her trusting love—her innocent confidence in him, her tutor, father, and her friend! . . . . Even the old Earl himself—the old, foolish, pompous, man—was regretted; there he sat in his pompadour velvet coat, his rich embroidered waistcoat, his ribbon and his star; and the poor little botanist, creeping like some figure of old time about the scene. . . . Was it all but a vision!—a frostwork of the fancy, that had now melted into nothing?

He might almost have thought so, it was so long since he had heard anything of them. He had written on his arrival in London to inform Mr. Green of the loss he had sustained, but that letter, it appears, must have been lost. The old botanist knew where he was now living, but it seemed strange to Gerald that he did not in the only letter he had received from him, once allude to the death of his mother. It seemed as if he had not been apprised of it, but still imagined her living in London with her son. Gerald was a little surprised at this circumstance. but attributed it to the poor old man's forgetfulness, and thought no more about it.

It was now sometime since the old man had written at all; and his last letter had been more confused, melancholy, and incoherent than ever; to say nothing of the additional obscurity occasioned by a hand, that scarcely any patience could decypher.

Gerald was feeling particularly depressed and uncomfortable this evening—his hands were hot, and his mouth was dusty and dry—he felt slovenly, dirty, and untidy; his whole frame relaxed, and wearied with continual labour, thoroughly worn out and done for.

As he stood at his window gasping for breath, upon this stifling evening; looking down upon the wretched sycamore tree, and miserable court; where a scolding mother was hawling along by the arm, and tormenting with her vociferations, a screaming, obstinate, dirty, child,—the weary, slipshod maid-of-all-work knocked at the door, and panting, poor thing, with toiling up her four pairs of stairs, put her head, with her blowsy hair, and tumbled cap, into the room, with—

"Please, sir, here's a boy in the street, as says as how he wants to speak with you on particular business. Must I let him up?"

"Certainly, if he wants to speak with me —What sort of a boy is he?"

"He's an odd-looking body enough, sir—He seems mortal tired, and ready to drop, and all over dust and dirt—he must be a country bumpkin, or somewhat of that sort, I reckon sir, for he's got a sort of a carter's frock on—like such as come in with hay carts—though he's but a young boy too, sir."

"But what can he want with me?"—said Gerald, turning round from his window; "However, shew him up."

"He wouldn't tell his business anyhow, for I axed him over and over again. . . . La! my stars! if he an't coming up the stairs his self. . . . Please, master impudence, keep your distance; we don't let such gentry as you come littering up our stairs all by their selves—No, that we doesn't."

"I 'm a very poor boy, ma'am," began the boy, in a low, humble voice; "and I shall hurt nobody in the world.—Pray tell me, does not a Mr. James live here?"

"And what's your business with Mr. James," replied the maid; "Can't you tell a body that, as asks you?"

But, struck with the gentleness of the boy's voice, Gerald himself came forward, and said,

"I am Gerald James. What do you want with me?"

He looked down the darkened staircase, and saw a very wearied, delicate-looking figure of a boy slowly coming up the last stairs; he was dressed in a sort of carter's frock, fastened by a belt round his waist; he was covered with dust, and his hat was slouched over his face so that his features could scarcely be seen. He seemed to toil very painfully up the last steep stairs, and held by the banisters, panting hard when he had reached the top.

"What do you come here for, my boy?—And what is your business with me?" said Gerald again, after allowing him a little time to recover breath.

The boy stood silent, holding down his head; by the colour of his hands and skin, Gerald now discovered that he was a Mulatto.

He seemed oppressed with fear; and overcome with fatigue and exhaustion.

He trembled, and looked faint and ill.

At last, as Gerald approached nearer to him, on the very narrow landing-place, that terminated the stairs,—still reiterating his questions, but in a very gentle and com-

passionate tone,—the boy said in a very low voice,

"—I was a stranger, and ye took me in."—

"Come in then,"—said Gerald, struck by the words and by the tone in which they were uttered. "Come in, then, and rest yourself. The day has been dreadfully hot and oppressive, and your shoes are dusty with travel . . . . and are falling to pieces, I see. —You have come a long way, and you seem faint and hungry."

"Yes, I am both,"—said the boy.

"Fetch us some bread and cheese, and a little beer," said Gerald, giving the maid money.

"Some milk," whispered the boy.

"My stars! only to think of sich as him must ax for milk. Law, the milkmaid has been gone by this half-hour;—you don't think we take in milk for such as you;—beggars must not be choosers," quoth the somewhat scornful lady of all-work to her evident inferior. "Law! as if I should go trolloping about for such as you."

"—A cup of cold water, to one of these little ones — shall in no case fail of its reward," said the boy calmly.

"Well, if I ever! law! if he don't quote Scripture like any parson. Well, my little

fellow," said the maid-of-all-work, really a good-natured slattern. "We 'll get you something better than that, any ways," and away she went.

The boy remained standing on the landing-place, as if irresolute what to do next.

"You had better come in and sit down till she comes back," said Gerald.

The boy still hesitated, then he seemed suddenly to take his resolution. With a sort of effort he loosed the banisters, walked slowly across the little landing and entered the room. He looked round with an anxious, eager expression of hope and curiosity, then sank down upon a chair in the attitude of one overcome by the most terrible and grievous disappointment. His head sank upon his breast, and he covered his face for some time with his hands. At last he faltered out,

"I thought that there was an old lady living here."

"No," said Gerald, "she is no more."

And he turned to the window, full of the recollection of that mother, whom he had fondly hoped would have shared his little home, and not reflecting upon the strange circumstance of the boy asking for her.

There was a long silence, interrupted only

by the deep breathings of the boy; who seemed quite overcome with fatigue and weariness. Once he moved, and Gerald turned round. He had only taken up a glass of water, which stood near him on the writing-table; had swallowed a few spoonfuls of its contents, and restored it to its place. He then relapsed into his state of perfect stillness.

Betty was now heard tramping up the stairs, and soon made her appearance with a plate of bread and cheese, a big kitchen-knife, and a pot of beer from the nearest tap. She set all down with little ceremony upon the table; pushing aside and disarranging the books and papers, several of which fell upon the floor, and saying,

"Take a pull at it, my little fellow, it will do you good," put the porter down just before him, and slamming the door, went away.

"Eat,"—said Gerald, turning round.

The boy took up a piece of the bread,—put it to his mouth and tried to eat it, but the effort appeared too much; he seemed to turn sick, and laid down the untasted morsel.

"I am like the poor famished poet," . . . . at last he said, "I believe it would choke me."

He took up the glass of water, as he said this, and emptied it.

Gerald now became really interested; there was evidently something more than common about the boy; he left his window, and coming up to him, asked him very kindly, "What it was that he really wanted?—Did he want money? Or was there anything that he could do for him?"

"It is not money, sir, ... but . . . . but a very great favour—that I want granted."

"Speak it out, then," said Gerald.—"But what led you to think of me?"

"Because you have been a friend to the friendless—and a father to the fatherless—and that I have not one single friend in the wide, wide world," . . . . said the boy.

"But what can *I* do for you?"

"Let me stay with you. . . . For where under heaven," lifting up his eyes, "is there other place for me?"

Gerald started back in amazement.

"Let me stay with you!—let me be your slave!—let me be your servant!—only let me stay with you."

"But I don't want a slave, and I am too poor to keep a servant," said Gerald, half-laughing.

"Ah! Don't laugh,"—said the boy.

"And, pray, why may I not?"

"We must not laugh in the presence of extreme misery," said he.

"But I hope that is not the case with you?"

"I *have* been very miserable.—I do not say that I am quite so miserable now, because I think you are an humane and a good man, and, that when you see a fellow-creature reduced to the utmost distress, *you* will not, 'pass by on the other side.'" . . . . He paused and then went on.—"I think you will dare to do a singular thing, to rescue a fellow-creature from the last despair. '*You* will put him on your own beast, and take care of him;'—You will let me, stranger as I am, stay with you . . . . because I am a forlorn, lost, human being; and if *you* don't . . . . Who will?"

"But what must I do with you?"

"I will give you no trouble—I only ask to be your servant; I will serve you as well as ever I can."

"But suppose you should prove to be a little swindler, or a little thief, or a little impostor,—what am I to do with you then?" said Gerald.

"I shall not prove either swindler, or

thief," answered the boy—" and as for impostor, I don't know very well what you mean by that—I cannot very well *impose* upon you—for I tell you nothing but, that I am the most friendless and forlorn of human beings—and that unless you take me in, I shall perish in the street, ... and most unquestionably so I shall. . . . But you must do as you please," said he, rising.

Gerald paused, and deliberated a few moments.

" Well," said he at last.—" It is certain I have no one on earth to please but myself—Why you throw yourself thus upon me, I am at a loss to conceive—but, come what will of it, you shall stay with me for this one night at least."

The boy clasped his hands suddenly together, in a sort of ecstasy of joy; and as he did so his hat fell off, and Gerald perceived that his forehead and left eye were covered with a tremendous black patch, and a broad black ribbon, which secured the bandage, went round his head; passing through his curling coal-black hair. The uncovered eye was light, which harmonized ill enough with his dark brown mulatto complexion. The lower part of the face was delicately and

well formed; and there was something inexpressibly engaging and sweet about the mouth. The whole character of this singular being's appearance shewed at least, that,

"Edwin was no vulgar boy."

"But where shall we put you to sleep?" said Gerald.

The boy looked perplexed for a moment.

"Cannot they let me sleep in the coal-hole?" said he.

"Not quite so bad as that," said Gerald, again laughing; and this time he was not reproved for it.

"We will try for something a little more comfortable. There is a closet I call my wardrobe, do you think you can squeeze yourself into that? You shall have half my bedding if you can sleep on the floor.

"It will be a fairy palace to me," said the boy cheerfully; "but I shan't take away your bed. In the east country they always sleep upon the floor—and I am resolved to be no trouble—I dare say I may have your cloak, and I can roll myself up in that—we do it in the east, you know. And now I *am* quite hungry—I may eat some

of the bread and have a little more water, may not I?—"

Pointing to a bottle of water that stood upon the chimney-piece: "And then, sir, shall you want anything more with me, before I go to bed?"

"Nothing—but first eat your supper."

The boy began to eat now, with some appearance of appetite; he did not touch the cheese, but ate a piece of bread and swallowed an immense tumbler of water.

"Now you shall have my mattress," said Gerald.

"No, that I will not."

Gerald, however, persisted, and the boy was forced to yield. The mattress was taken off the bed, and laid upon the closet floor—hard lodging enough—but this seemed no way to discomfort the boy; he went into his closet, and without taking off any of his clothes, rolled himself up in a blanket, which Gerald had forced upon him, and covering all but the very tip of his nose, seemed in a moment to be fast asleep.

Gerald having seen him comfortably stowed away, returned to his room to muse upon this strange incident.

Did it not seem strange, that at the very moment when he was lamenting his own solitary, uninteresting, desolate life; reviewing with sadness his isolated situation,—with no object of affection to give a purpose to his labours, no tenderness or solicitude for others, to sweeten and ennoble toil,—that another helpless, friendless human being should be suddenly thrown upon his hands.

There was something singular about the boy that excited his interest in a more than common degree. Probably it was the extraordinary delicacy and purity of his tone of voice and pronunciation, which was the most remarkable thing about him. Habituated as Gerald had become to the vulgar cockney language of his landlady and her Betty, these sweet, delicate accents came upon his ear like a sound of long-remembered music. A crowd of associations rushed upon his mind with the tones; they sounded like those he had heard in better moments; but when, or where, or how, he could not in the least recollect.

His heart yearned to this poor helpless being; just as it had once yearned over the

unfortunate children under such different circumstances.

Sterne says, beautifully, of my uncle Toby: "There was something in his face: to which the forlorn and helpless flew for refuge and assistance,—and before he had been five minutes in the room—the son of the unfortunate Lefevre had crept between his knees—was pulling the flaps of his coat—and nestling in his bosom."—

And so it seemed to be with Gerald; there was a sweetness, yet a force about him, that called upon the unfortunate to take refuge there. But how should this houseless wanderer have found that out?—Whence this strange and unaccountable desire to take shelter with him?

"I will make him tell me all in the morning," thought Gerald as he was undressing.

He took up the poor fellow's dusty hat, which he had left upon the table. It felt heavy, and he perceived that it had a sort of double lining in the crown: there seemed to be money in it.

"He said he did not want money," thought he.

"Evan Brown, his hat," was written upon

a piece of paper and pasted inside the crown; this name and the possession of money, which seemed to warrant him against the suspicion of being a common thief or swindler, was the only piece of information the hat afforded.

Gerald fell asleep, rejoicing for once in his unfettered position, which allowed him, at least, to indulge the natural kindness of his heart, and do, what many would call a very singular and whimsical thing, by keeping the boy.

His mind rejoiced in the prospect of protection afforded, and affection returned; and he determined, if the boy proved deserving, to give him the best education and assistance which his opportunities would permit.

What a new interest had opened upon his life —his solitary depression was at an end "I will make a clever fellow of the boy, if there be anything in him," said he, as he fell asleep, and dreamed of Lexicons and Grammars.

CHAPTER XX.

When Gerald went into his sitting-room the next morning he found that the little guest, true to his promise of waiting upon him as a servant, had been before-hand with him.

The room was arranged with an attention to neatness which made even that sordid apartment look cheerful and respectable: the window was open, a morning sun was shining into the room — the very chirping sparrows, the abhorred of the evening before, sounded almost pleasant to his ears; the aspect of everything was changed as by enchantment.

His little breakfast was waiting for him. The boy, who when he arrived the evening before had carried a small bundle in his hand, was standing by the table, arrayed in a clean smock frock, and his hands, and what could be seen of his face, had been carefully washed; while his delicate white teeth shone

like pearls, in contrast with his dark skin, when he spoke;—the large black patch was still over his eye.

Gerald insisted upon his joining him at breakfast; after which the boy employed himself in collecting Gerald's clothes, and then proceeded to arrange his little book-case, all things being terribly out of order. He proceeded about his work in the most quiet and noiseless manner. His air was this morning grave even to melancholy; all the cheerfulness of the preceding night was gone.

Gerald asked his guest a few questions, but these appeared at present so much to hurry and distress him, that he forbore for the present further inquiry; and contented himself with watching the singular lightness of footstep, and elegance of movement, with which his young companion passed about the room.

Passing by the table he observed his hat, he took it up and examined the crown.

"There is money in it," said Gerald.

"Yes," said the boy.

"You had better not let it lie about here, my good fellow," said Gerald; "The people of this house are, I hope, honest good people

enough; but that hat is heavy — You had better, perhaps, let me take care of it for you."

"Will you?—Oh, will you?"—said he, eagerly; and, taking a penknife, he unripped the crown of his hat; he took out a small packet.

"There is not much of it," said he.

"Not much for some people; but a good deal for you to possess, my little fellow," thought Gerald.

The morning was now advancing, and it was time for Gerald to set to business.

The table was cleared, and he began his work, and now all was silent in the room; the quick scratching of Gerald's rapid pen was the only sound that could be heard.

The boy stood with his back towards him, gazing out upon the sky. He did not move for a long time. But one or two very deep and heavy sighs, from time to time, broke from him. Presently, he turned round, and stood watching Gerald, as he laboured at the table. At last, quite fatigued and hot with writing, Gerald threw down his pen.

"Are you not very much tired?" said the boy, approaching the table, timidly. "I can write pretty well—would you not

be so very good as to give me something to do?"

"With pleasure," said Gerald, giving a piece of writing to copy. "If you can do this, I will really be very much obliged to you."

"Then, I can be of use to you," said he, with an accent of something more like pleasure, than anything that had escaped him this morning.

"Indeed you can."

He set to work. He wrote a large, somewhat stiff office hand, and he wrote very slowly and with difficulty; but he was indefatigable, and he had completed his task by about three o'clock. He threw down his pen, and looked dreadfully tired—he had steadily resisted all Gerald's endeavours to interrupt him, till his task was over.

"It is three o'clock," said Gerald, taking out his watch, "and I have an appointment, and must go out; . . . and what will you do with yourself in the meantime, here?" offering him a shilling, "Can you go out, and get some dinner?"

"I am afraid to go out in this town by myself," said the boy, colouring through his dark skin.

"Why, you are a strange fellow!" said his friend; "Here you find your way quite alone to me—and now you are afraid to go out by yourself?"

"Don't be angry."—

"No—I am not angry—only perplexed; however, I will give the shilling to Betty, and she shall get you some food."

"What would the writing I have done for you to-day be worth?" said the boy, as if struck with a sudden thought.

"About ninepence."

"Then give ninepence to Betty, and let her get me some dinner. I have not come to be a burden to you—oh, no! I will earn my own bread—at least I will strive to do it."

"But you said you would be my servant, . . . and as my servant, I am bound to feed you."

"Are you? . . . I forgot—Yes—I did say I would be your servant—you must do as you like, then."

"I shall be out for some time, and how will you amuse yourself."

"Watch for your return, and I shall be happy," was the reply.

CHAPTER XXI.

In this manner about ten days had passed. This singular boy continued to serve his master with the most assiduous care; labouring for him perseveringly at his pen, till his small hands were quite stiff and tired. This labour Gerald, at first, with the utmost kindness, endeavoured to prevent; but, finding that his companion, when not so employed, seemed to be overwhelmed with fits of the blackest melancholy, he let him do as he would.

One day Gerald had been tormented with a violent nervous headache, to which he had of late been subject. The cares of his little companion, rivalled those, of the gentle and affectionate Prince Arthur, for the ungentle Hubert. He bound his handkerchief round his brows, bathed them with cold water, soothed them by the pressure of his soft hand, did everything that tenderness could

suggest, to alleviate the suffering he saw his friend endure.

"It is because you write too much," .... said he.

"But I must write much," said Gerald; "you know I have my bread to get—It will not do to starve."

"You said, at first, that you were too poor to keep a servant,"—said his companion, as he turned away.

He was very thoughtful during all the rest of that evening, and sighed frequently.

Gerald was, however, so much oppressed with headache, that he could take little notice of him.

He went to bed early, leaving his companion sitting in the window; he heard him afterwards pacing up and down the room uneasily.

The next morning Gerald rose early, and set more strenuously to work than ever, in order to make up for his lost time.

There happened to be nothing which at that moment he could give the boy to copy, so he sat by the table, his head resting upon his hand, watching the pen of his friend as it hurried across the lines.

There was a very long silence; at last Gerald, quite weary, dropped his pen, and fell back in his chair with an exclamation of fatigue.

The boy looked at him, but said nothing; at last, as he was about to resume his task,

"Are you, then, really, so *very* poor?" said he.

"No one can well be poorer," said Gerald, with a little laugh; "and really if these unfortunate headaches should incapacitate me, I don't know very well, what is to become of us."

"*Of us!*—And you are so poor!—and you labour so hard! . . . and yet you have charged yourself in your poverty with a fresh burden . . . For I am a burden to you,—I know that I am,—Generous Gerald!" . . . .

"No!" said Gerald, a good deal moved, You are no burden to me; the writing you do is nearly sufficient to repay the trifling expense that you are to me:—and besides, I am such a melancholy, lonely fellow, I really don't know what I should do without you. . . You cannot think what a comfort it is, to have somebody about me, that seems to love me."

"*Seems!*" . . . and the colour rose and fell, beneath the deep olive of his skin.

"I cannot imagine," said Gerald, now fairly throwing down his pen and looking up, "what strange chance it could be that brought us, after all, together.—We have now been living here for days, and are become quite friends.—I could fancy we had known each other for years; and yet I have never heard one word of your history. You are a singular fellow, certainly .... But it is growing dark now, and I am tired to death of scribbling; so come, put yourself down there.—Sit, good cousin. Sit, I pray you—and let me hear your story."

"A *blank*, my Lord,"—was the reply, in the words of Viola.

Gerald started: the quotation—the tone—What words from a boy!—and where had he heard those tones before?...

"Nay," he continued, more earnestly, "I beseech you, let me hear your history—for a history, after all, you must have .... Who were your parents?—Whence do you come, and why are you here?"

"*My* history!... alas! what a history!—*My* Parents!—where are my parents?... Parents!—History!—alas! what a tale!—What a ruin!—What a scene of utter desolation!—When I look back all is dreary,

horror, and confusion.—When I look forward! . . ."

There was a moment of irresolution . . . a moment's pause.—Then, impetuously tearing away the false hair and bandage, which had disguised her, and falling at his feet, she cried,

"Yes! you shall indeed hear my history! It is time you should hear my history!—I can, and I dare delay no longer! . . . Yes, Gerald, you shall hear my story . . . Oh! how will you blame, how despise!—perhaps disown, perhaps betray me! . . . But, Gerald! Gerald!" embracing his knees, "for the love of him, now an angel before his Maker—have some pity, upon the most misled and mishandled of human creatures!"

"Eternal Heavens!" was all he could exclaim, starting up from his chair, "You!" . . .

"Yes!" and her head sank—bowed down, crimsoned with shame,—while the arms, that had embraced his knees, were now folded over her bosom,—as she knelt, the very image of humble contrition, before him. "Yes, I am that thing without a name;—that lost, and houseless, and outcast stranger."—

He stood, staring and aghast.

"Yes, I see how it is," she went on

rapidly, "I see how it is — I knew how it would be. . .You are shocked, grieved, angry: and what will you do with me? I shall be a chain round your limbs!—a fetter to your will!—a burden!—a difficulty!—a disgust! —a despair! But think, Gerald, I have been beaten and trampled upon by a sister—cast over to a wicked libertine by a father. . . I have no protector from vice, no shelter from cruelty . . . I have no hope upon earth but in you;—You are so good,—you make me good;—You are so kind, you make me tranquil;—You are so wise, that with you I shall not go mad.—Let me keep this disguise—let me be your humble little brother . . . your little slave—your bondman . . . Let me stay with you, Gerald!"

All this flowed with a rapidity and earnestness which prevented reply. She was kneeling before him as he stood. Once more she spread out her arms—again she clung to and embraced his knees.

"Clarinda!"—at last he said mournfully, and not endeavouring to raise her, "Clarinda!—Is it you?"

"Nay,—call me not by that forfeited name . . . That is the name of one from whom you once hoped better things.—Give

not that name, to a houseless, disgraced, blighted, crushed worm, like me!"—

And she turned from him bitterly—and resting her head upon a chair;—her arms folded under her face,—she groaned aloud. He too groaned. He stood there upright, immovable; perplexed with a thousand strange conflicting feelings — duty, propriety, honour — contending with pity, interest, and tenderness.

Her tears, as was her wont, flowed now fast and silently over her arms; again covered with that streaming pale hair which he remembered so well; but he would not, —he could not,—he dared not approach her; . . . at last he said,

"Nay, do not cry so."—

The words were simple indeed, but something in the tone cheered her. She lifted up her head, and looked wistfully at him.

"You will not turn me into the street?" . . she said.

"Alas, my Clarinda! — What would I — what ought I to do?" said he, now sitting down by her, and taking her not unwilling hand; which she surrendered to him, in the faith of the purest, most undoubting innocence.

"What a situation for you!—for me!—How strange!—How perplexing!...What steps to take?"

"There is no perplexity," said she, rising, and with the strange, serious, earnest, half-childish simplicity of her usual manner, "you have only to let me stay with you."

"But, sweet Clarinda,"—he could scarcely help smiling at her simplicity,—"You *must* know that this, is utterly impossible."

"Why, what harm would there be?"...

"Harm!—my dear child?"—

"But what else can I do, Gerald? If I were to tell you *all*—but that I cannot do... but if you have the pity, and the mercy—which I think you have,—you will let me stay with you.—There," said she, taking a letter from her bosom. "There, read this."

He opened the small, ill-folded paper, and read—

"MY DEAR MR. GERALD,

"I believe I have done very, very wrong—but what can I do—I counselled this poor bird to fly away, and to take refuge with you and the good old lady. Take the poor dove to your hearts, good Mr. Gerald!—good

old lady!—They would give her to a very bad man here. I suppose I have done very wrong — but I am but a silly old man — and she, poor thing, but a child, after all!"

"Well," — fixing his eyes earnestly upon hers, "do you know what is in this letter?"

"No."—

"Clarinda — How long have you been in my house?"...

"Ten days," said she, a little startled at the grave tone in which he spoke.

"What would they say or do, if you went back?" —

"They need not kill me," said she firmly, "I could do that for myself."

"Father!" said Gerald solemnly, "you see this creature;... She has broken every tie but one,—and that binds me to her,—and her to me;—Do I do wrong?... Do I do right?"

"Clarinda," said he, fixing his eyes steadily upon her, "do you know the consequence of what you have done?... You must be my wife."—

"Your wife!" and the ten thousand innocent shames—childish surprises—rapturous woman's loves, flew over her speaking face

—Heaven was opening to her. "Your wife!" she faltered.

"Will you?" said he, bending tenderly over her, as her head now sank upon her bosom. "Will you, Clarinda?—It is, indeed, a hard, sordid, narrow lot, I offer you; but I see no other means to rescue you from dishonour, disgrace, and despair."

"But I will not be your wife for my own sake," said she.

"For your own sake!" cried he, now thoroughly melted.... "Ah! let me so trifle with my conscience! Let me say—for *your* sake it must be so—How else could I justify?—How else dare I...?"

"Do you love me?" she hardly articulated.

He caught her one fond moment to his heart—it was but for a moment—the next he was himself again; and they were seated side by side, and hand in hand, quietly discussing their plans.

She, in a few words, related her story; she dwelt lightly upon the sufferings, and the fears which had determined her old friend the botanist to aid her in her project of escape. The plan of these two simple children—for what were they both but children?—had been for Clarinda to take refuge with Gerald's mother; and there to remain

concealed under the care of the good old lady until the audacious suit of Sir Charles should be withdrawn; or the Earl be persuaded to listen to reason.

A cousin of Mary's,—one of those stout women-merchants, who, as was the custom of those days, travelled the country with a horse and cart, conveying Scotch goods to the different English fairs, had taken charge of the young lady to London.—In order the more effectually to disguise her, she had recommended and procured the dress Clarinda wore.

The journey had been long and tedious; and the good old woman had quitted her charge at the end of the small street where Gerald lodged; and seeing her received into the house, had proceeded upon her way. Clarinda had ascended the stairs, in the full confidence of finding Mrs. James living with her son.

Once arrived, and the woman gone, she had no retreat: her first idea had been to disclose herself, but a terror and timidity she could not resist had arrested the impulse—The girlish and romantic scheme then had suggested itself, of remaining with him unknown, sheltered by his protection, and supported by his kindness; which she would

repay by the assiduity of her tenderness and her cares. This plan may seem too wild for probability, but it must be remembered that Clarinda was young and quite inexperienced; and that the strongest and purest affection, and the most unbounded confidence and reliance had long united her to Gerald as to the tenderest of brothers. She was in the habit of feeling that all was safe and right, where he was.

As for Gerald, after the first surprise and shock were over, he felt that, for both of them there now remained but one alternative—he had an unsullied name, at least, to offer her —an honest man's home to shelter her. After the strange step she had taken, a return to her own sphere was evidently impossible; better let her be happy in his!

"And why not?"—mused he, as he paced the room—while she, wearied with past emotion and anxiety, and full now of the most peaceful confidence, had fallen asleep upon the sofa—"and why not?—What is there that my honest industry cannot provide that is necessary to comfort? And why may not she be as respected, and as happy as an honest man's wife, as if she were married in her own station?....Is there not something very false and unsound in all

this? Is not a happy home, a quiet hearth —Are not two affectionate hearts, two sympathising minds—are not these among the best blessings which this world can give? Does it matter whether this diet of the Gods be served in china or in pewter? . . . Strange instinct!—her very nature seems made for this simple life! Its cheerful industry—its honest affections—its happy freedom—She has perhaps chosen the best after all; but best or worst, the die is cast, and honour and duty point one way."

* * * * *

And at an early hour one dark morning; the heavy yellow fog, filling the streets, and very rooms, with a darkness that might be felt, having resumed that day, for the first time, her woman's dress,—clinging to his arm, they might be seen, . . . he a tall, dark figure, she a slight, childish one,—threading the narrow streets and alleys that led to St. B—'s Church.

Unattended, they approached the altar, where a snivelling clergyman hurried through the ceremony which bound them eternally to one another.

It was over . . . No congratulating friends received the trembling bride — no mother's

kind caress—no father's blessing—no loving sister's voice was there—all was dark, silent, and cold.

But she looked at him . . . . she cast her eyes upon that face—that calm, tender, manly face—it was all the world to her.—Her simple, affectionate, loving nature had here found rest—the magic circle, which had made her his for ever, pressed her finger, and she felt as if she were empress of the world.—She had a rich treasure of undying love in her heart,—and what would the gold of the Indies have been to her?

He was content—for he was satisfied that he had done right. Perhaps had he loved her with passion, he might have doubted his own conclusions; as it was, he felt that he had ministered, to no selfish wishes of his own. He loved her, it is true, and loved her tenderly; but the ardour of his soul was not there; another idol had once reigned in his breast—it had been overthrown—the fair image shattered to atoms, and in its place sat a grinning fiend; but he could not love again, and he did not love again in that sense of the word—love.

But if fondness, tenderness, pity, gentle interest, . . . all the sweetest and softest affec-

tions that a brother can feel for a little, wayward, helpless sister, merited to take their place, these he felt; as he vowed from his inmost, earnest soul to devote himself to her happiness,—to the happiness of one, thus flung by fate, and her own confiding, loving temper, into his arms.

How well they redeemed their mutual pledges—how faithfully, in many sorrows, many wanderings, many temptations, it would be a long story to tell—and we all perhaps are weary, and would fain be dismissed.

Life tried them both severely—Sore were their struggles—much were they destined to endure . . . But her love was like a heavenly star, shedding light and radiance upon their broken way—A love never weary—never languishing—that toiled and endured—smiling and content, over the dry crust his presence cheered. Her heart!—her warm loving heart! sufficed to animate and endear the dreariest privations.

Rich, inexhaustible, inestimable treasure! —In poverty, in sickness, in pain, in death, it was the same. She never looked back—she never regretted what she had done—she loved him—she toiled for him—she suffered for him—and she was happy.

I am an old man now, and the scenes of my youth appear dim, shining through the vista of many years—and long, indeed, is the vista, and many are the years which intervene between this present time and the day when I first became acquainted with the circumstances of this story.

I was a young man—and I was travelling for reasons—with which it is needless to trouble any one—when I was stopped at the town of N——, for want of horses.

The town was filled with company. There had been a grand musical festival celebrated there, and all was bustle and gaiety; the streets were crowded with carriages going to and fro, which were filled with beautiful women, full-dressed—in their nodding high ostrich feathers, as was the fashion of the day.—Not only all the hotels, but every house that ever, upon any occasion, furnished a lodging, was, upon this occasion, full.

The oratorio had been performed in the

morning. A concert was to occupy the evening.

As I lounged into the bar of the great hotel—for parlour, or private accommodation of any sort, there was none to be had—I found the landlady and her daughter, busy handing out their jellies and confections to the hurrying waiters. I sat down upon a chair and began to chat, as the custom of young men is, with the fair hostesses of the place; and they asked me whether I meant to go to the concert in the evening.

I said "No, I was tired, and that I did not think I should."

"Nay, but—" said they, "there is a quite entirely a new singer to come out,—and it is said she has a wonderful voice, and never was heard to sing before, ...and some say, perhaps, will never sing again."

"Everybody is curious to hear her," added the landlady, taking up the conversation: "for they say she is quite a young creature, ... and some say was never taught."

I had not much desire to hear a singer who had never been taught—such untaught notes sound very sweet in romances, but in common life are usually discordant enough.

So I said "I should not go."

And in that mind I continued till I saw everybody in the hotel going; and as the carriages, filled with beautiful women and elegant young men, rolled from the door, I began to think I was a very stupid, idle fellow not to go too—and as the night was particularly fine, though quite dark, I took my hat and cane, and away I went.

The room was filled to overflowing when I arrived, and it was with difficulty I could procure a seat. The assembly was brilliant to a degree of which you, of this generation, can form no conception. The women were dressed with high heads powdered—their plumes of feathers nodding gracefully in the air—their head-dresses, necks, and stomachers sparkling with a profusion of precious stones, real or imitated—their dresses of rich brocades, in every variety of striking colours; their open gowns relieved by their fine white flounced petticoats, or aprons:—while the men in bags and solitaires, dresses of rich velvet, and waistcoats of gold or silver embroidery, were scarcely less gay in their apparel, than the ladies themselves.

This brilliant assembly, now hushed in an attitude of deep attention,—saluted my eyes as I crept softly up the side alley, ...

and found myself a place just opposite the orchestra. At this moment Giardini was playing a solo on his enchanting violin.

The overture and several of the songs were over before I entered. Giardini ended amid a thunder of applause; and bending his head, with the simple dignity of a great artist, he saluted and retired.

I looked at my concert bill and saw that the new singer was now to appear.

After fixing my eyes upon my paper, reading, as one does, every word in it: I began to wonder that the song did not begin. I looked up at the orchestra—it was still empty. The musicians who accompanied the singers were, indeed, at their places, their instruments already tuned in their hands—they were chatting with one another over their desks, ... then they seemed to become impatient, and one or other might be seen peeping down to the place reserved for the principal singers; but it remained vacant. The leader of the band looked impatiently round, as if for explanation, but there was nobody there to give it.

At last the audience began to testify their ill-humour by sundry little signs; knocking of canes against the floor—low

murmurings of discontent among the ladies, and so on.—At last the noises became louder and more imperative, ... and, as if summoned by them, the director of the concert, suddenly appeared,—leading a young lady by the hand.

She was dressed in the deepest mourning—a young creature, of small stature, very delicate, pale, and fair; with her hair of light faded hue—just plainly raised from her forehead, and dressed over a simple cushion.

She came forward—and her eyes, with a sort of calm, mazed expression, turned towards the audience—She looked like one in a sort of waking dream, who hardly knew where she was.—

The audience received her with a burst of applause;—her reputation had preceded her; and this simple figure excited at once delight and interest.

At this she seemed to awaken, as it were, and recover herself from her dreaming trance.—

She made a very grave, composed curtsy, and then turning to the director, received from him a sheet of music. — He took his place, waved his magic roll of paper —and the accompaniment began.

While it was playing, she stood immovable, as some fair statue of grave modesty. It ceased, and she began to sing,

"Agnus Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi."

What a voice—what a voice was there!

It was, perhaps, a strange song to choose for an evening concert; but, as I understood afterwards, she was not a sufficiently accomplished musician, to undertake music that required any great display of skill in execution.

But, what a voice!—How sweet, penetrating, rich and full.—Sweet nightingale! what volumes of entrancing sound issued from that shrill, warbling throat, and delicate, heaving chest!

While she sang, her eyes were at first fixed upon her music-paper—but, she had too much of the soul of music in her, to keep that passionless expression long—her eyes were raised, her countenance dilated .... but it was only while she sang; the moment that delightful music ceased, she resumed her grave and calm expression—and while thunders of applause broke forth on every side; while the very roof of the concert-room re-echoed with the sound of applauding hands, thumping sticks, ancora! ancora! ancora!—she made a low curtsy,

and was about to retire.—But the demands for an encore were not to be resisted; and as she was retreating, the director stepped up to her,—he seemed to speak with an action between remonstrance and beseeching—she yielded—and suffered him to lead her back to her place.

There was a fresh burst of enthusiasm, the very walls rang with it — but she seemed to heed it not. She stood mute and passive till the storm subsided — then raising her soft blue eyes to the leader of the band, and just turning her head, she signified that she was ready to begin again.

He began, and she followed, and the same enchanting music was the result.

If I were to pretend, that her singing had any of the artistical perfection, of the present day, I should deceive you. — It was perfectly simple singing, but given with that good taste, which a strong, natural, musical sentiment inspires — and with a voice whose richness, power, and feeling, I have never anywhere, or at any time heard surpassed. —She ended,—again made her grave curtsy, and turning round, now left the orchestra.

I looked at my bill, and saw she was not to appear again.—I supposed she would

therefore leave the room directly, and return home; and I hastened to quit the concert-room, with a number of other young men, all of us hurrying to the door under the same impression.

We crowded to the great door—but no carriage was in waiting to receive the syren, — we waited long, but neither carriage nor syren appeared. One by one, the young men tired with waiting, returned to the concert-room. I, alone, remained standing on the threshold of the door—the night was beautiful, the stars shining in their glory on the dark curtain of a moonless sky—I stood gazing in silence—the delightful music I had heard still sounding in my ears. I wished to hear nothing more that night. I stood in a sort of idle reverie, and quite heedless of what was going on around me.

When two female figures passed out at the door, and I heard one say—

"Dear Mary! do you think that we shall want the lanthorn?"

"Bless me, yes to be sure, dear," said she who carried the lanthorn;—"you forget how dark it is in the alleys."

I looked—It was the singer.

I just caught a glimpse of her face, as she turned to the lanthorn-bearer, and the light fell full upon her features. A moment, and she and her companion were gone down the street.

She was wrapped in a black cloak, the hood of which was over her head—her companion, too, had a cloak and clean mob-cap on. They went down the street—and what could I do but follow them—a curiosity irresistible led me to follow this enchanting mistress of song — who walked on foot; and with a lanthorn, to guide her through dark alleys.

They walked rapidly forward, closely side by side, but neither of them uttering a word till they came to the bottom of the street—and there, to be sure, they did enter into a dark alley, and a very dark alley, for it was so narrow that the light of day could hardly penetrate it; much less that of the faint stars which alone illuminated the night. When they entered the alley, the young lady seemed a little frightened—and I observed that she took hold of her companion's arm—they walked more quickly than before.

Suddenly there was heard a wild hallo, and a number of young men, turning suddenly out of a way that communicated with

this alley, burst upon the two women—and surrounded them with a loud, insolent laugh.

"What have we caught here? By Jove! we have netted a prize—Who would have thought to find pretty Sally in the alley? Come, Sally, let's see your face—what are you making all this fuss about?" resounded from side to side. The party consisted of *very* young men, who were evidently half drunk.

A scream of terror burst from the young lady—she clung to her attendant like a frightened child—bending down as if to hide herself, and screaming aloud.

The young men became more and more insolent, insisting upon tearing off her hood, and seeing her face. But I rushed down upon them like a lion—and swearing tremendously, I fear, and swinging my cane about like a quarter-staff, demanded passionately, what they meant by insulting a young lady of virtue and honour.

A loud laugh was my answer. But I pushed among them, and forcing my way to the young lady, I stooped down to her, and said, "Take my arm, madam, and let me free you from this abominable persecution."

She hesitated—looked up in my face—

then a fresh burst of laughter decided her—she took my arm—and I, saying authoritatively, "Give way—this lady belongs to me"—assisted by the stout-armed Mary and my quarter-staff—pushed through the circle of offenders—They did not seem to care to pursue me, and so we made our way forwards. The lady was now about to withdraw her arm—but I, throwing all the respect possible into my manner, said, "Indeed, Madam, you had better let me see you home."

"Yes," said she, after a moment's pause, accepting my arm with a charmingly confiding air and manner—"and my husband shall thank you for your kindness."

Her husband!—she seemed so very young!

We proceeded till we came to a very obscure looking house, standing in a small court which terminated the alley. There we stopped—Mary knocked—an old woman, bent almost double with age, opened the door.

"How has he been?" said the young lady, hastily.

"Oh! much the same, but wearying for you to come home again."

The young lady passed hastily forward, while Mary signed to me to follow. She

opened the door of a very small apartment, cheerily lighted, however, by a blazing fire, and entering, with a "Well, I am safe home again," pressed forward to a low couch which stood on one side of the chimney, on which lay a young man, stretched at full length. On the other side of the fire was an infant's cradle.

"Art thou returned, my sweetest angel?" said the young man, in a tender mournful voice; "art thou?" . . . .

I started at the voice. "Whose voice is that?" cried I involuntarily.

She turned, and taking my hand, she said,—"Thank this gentleman, my dear husband, that I am not frightened to death!"

I approached the sofa, and beheld Gerald!——

"Gerald James!"—I cried.

"The same!" said he.

But he neither raised his head, nor offered his hand to meet mine, which was extended towards his—he could not—he had lost the use of his limbs. While we were speaking, the young lady had hastily turned aside, and peeped into the cradle. She now turned with an air of satisfaction, and said, "Mr. James, can you possibly know this young gentleman?"

"Yes, my sweet," said he, "he is a very old friend of mine."

"Oh, how fortunate!" she cried. "Now you will not be so dull and desolate. May I have the pleasure of knowing your name, sir?" said she, with the politeness and tone, of one bred in a far different sphere.

I gave it with a respectful bow, and taking her hand, I kissed it.

She now turned aside and whispered with Mary—then returning towards the fire, "You must sup with us to-night, sir," said she to me—then to her husband, "My dear Mr. James, entreat this gentleman to give us his company to-night—it will cheer you, and do you good. Will you not, sir?—We cannot offer you anything very inviting for your supper—but you will stay to have a chat with an old friend—will you not, sir?"

As she spoke, with a sweet, modest frankness in her manner, the young man's eyes were turned upon her, with an expression of the most exquisite tenderness.

"You will stay, then?" reiterated she.

"With the utmost pleasure," said I.

"Then, here is a seat by your friend. . . . . You see, sir, he is very ill indeed, and cannot even raise his hand to give you welcome;—

But it will do him good to see an old friend. Pray sit down here."

And I sat down on the chair she offered by his side.

Poor fellow! how was he changed! His beautiful eyes stood large in the sockets; his cheek was hollow and wasted; his hair still lay in fair tresses on his temples, but it was rusty, faded, and discoloured. I took his hand, which lay almost quite powerless by his side, it burned with a low wasting fever.

"You see me,"—was all he at that moment said, for a little cry was heard from the cradle; she flew to it, and lifting up a sweet, but very delicate infant, its beautiful eyes brilliant and large with refreshing sleep, though a tear stood on each cheek. She hushed the baby on her little delicate bosom, and left the room.

His eyes followed her till the door closed, and then he turned to me, and with a sort of cry of misery, "Her baby too!". . . .

I was silent a moment with astonishment; then I said,

"How long it is that I have lost sight of you.—Where have you been?—Where have you hid yourself, since you left us all at the Academy? And who is this sweet young

creature that you call your wife? And why do I see you here?" looking round the sordid apartment, in which even the bed was standing, giving evidence of the scantiness of their accommodations.

"Alas!" said he, "the whole seems like a strange sorrowful dream to me.—I find myself here, and woe the day! not alone.—A sweet, innocent being is condemned to share the burden of my helpless misery; . . . . I am totally impotent,—I cannot move a limb."

He then in an accent of despair related, how he had married, under circumstances the most extraordinary, a young lady born to a far better fate; how he had toiled to maintain her in something of the elegance to which she had been accustomed, her ignorance of things rendering her quite unaware of the efforts necessary to support a style of comfort, in her ideas so humble; how efforts above his strength had first occasioned dreadful headaches; how she had nursed and tended him,—never weary, never cast down, — tender, cheerful, and contented, though every succeeding day, obliged her to make a fresh sacrifice of some one or other of her remaining little comforts; till, at last, these

dreadful nervous affections of the brain had ended in an almost universal paralysis.

"And now," cried he, lamentably, "must the daughter of nobles maintain *me*." . . . .

Poor Gerald!

Yet still amid it all the same manly temper was preserved. Bitterly as he felt the pressure of his fate,—cruelly as he suffered, the same calm energy for which he had ever been remarkable, shewed itself in a passive and patient fortitude, which is thought to be no attribute of our sex. His was a beautiful spirit!

It was more beautiful to see his sweet and affectionate little partner, preserving her cheerfulness in the midst of all their disasters; dividing her time, with sweet alacrity, between her tender watchings over his pillow,—her cares for her infant, and her exertions to support them all.

And Mary, kind, good Mary,—what would they have done without her!

We had a happy supper, in spite of all.

Gerald seemed relieved and cheered by the presence of an old friend. He knew he could rely upon my regard, and the situation of his young wife seemed less desolate and defenceless, now there was another to whom

she could turn for protection and support. The young lady herself, seeing her husband look cheerful, was more than cheerful, she was almost gay; her sweet countenance became animated,—and a smile, rather in her eyes than on her lips, rendered it inexpressibly enchanting.

There was so much feeling in her tones and expression .... indeed she was made up of simple natural feeling. I thought so then, I found it so afterwards. She required no happiness, but through her own warm and generous heart,—*that* satisfied, all the troubles of life were but, as playthings to her.

I did not, you may believe, forsake the pillow of my friend. My presence continued to be a support and a solace to them both; and I had the inexpressible satisfaction, through the cares of an eminent physician, whom I persuaded them to let me call in, to see my friend gradually restored to the use of his limbs. During his long convalescence we used to spend our evenings very often together. Sometimes she would be from home, about her different avocations, and then by snatches and intervals, did I learn the whole of their history. It ended with the death of the old Earl, who had remained unforgiving

to the last; and for whom the Lady Clarinda was at this time in deep mourning. The unrelenting perseverance of the sister's enmity, too, had up to this period continued undiminished.

I have more to relate of this history, and if strength and spirits are spared me, may sometime, perhaps, take up my pen, and narrate what afterwards befel.

THE

TRIUMPHS OF TIME.

A SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

PREFACE TO A SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

Mr. Macauley, in one of his admirable papers in the Edinburgh Review, censures all imitations, free translations, editions, castigati, &c. &c.

Every person of good taste will be inclined to concur in the sentiment — but, that every rule has its exceptions, is a trite proverb; and, it has been thought, that the present instance furnishes one.

The lively pictures furnished by the French romance writers, of the manners, and modes of thinking of a period fast hastening away, are unfortunately mixed up with opinions relating to religion and morals, which render them—thank God for it—inadmissible into our lighter literature.

Yet, the pictures they contain, may almost be called historical; and, as such, contain interesting and instructive reading.

The experiment has here been made, whether, by recasting such of the incidents and sentiments as strictly belong to the Author, while everything connected with the general habits of life, and thought—manners, and feelings, is sedulously preserved, some good reading might not be obtained, and an agreeable addition be furnished to our stock of story books.

A SOLDIER'S FORTUNE.

CHAPTER I.

SUSANNE.

Paris.—It is about six o'clock in the morning, in the beginning of the month of August 1815.

The sun was rising, and steeping the golden dome of the Invalides in a flood of light; a soft breeze gently stirred the trees, within the garden of the Luxembourg, and the birds mingled their busy morning chirpings, with the pleasant rustlings of the leaves; and while the glorious sun was rising and diffusing the glow of life and light over the glad creation, while the breeze was gently whispering among the branches, and the small busy birds chattering merrily among the trees, a very poor and very sweet-looking little girl, not less

innocent, nor less active than the little birds themselves, was rising also; but not joyful as they, not playful as the breeze among the branches, and yet, poor little creature, she was scarcely fourteen years of age. This little girl was dressed in a gown of common brown stuff, which had evidently seen much service, and was subject, too, to other inconveniences incident to the wardrobes of little girls just bursting into womanhood, and springing upwards like the slender saplings of the forest. It was a little too short, and a little too tight; and sleeves, which had once been long, were now cut off at the elbow, because that troublesome member had taken the liberty *de se faire jour*, as the French say, through the well-worn material. The portion thus obtained had been devoted to the service of enlarging the body of the dress, that little simple frock body, which sat close round the neck, unrelieved by frill or collerette. Her stockings were of coarse grey, but were perfectly clean, and clumsy, heavy shoes encumbered two delicate little feet. Her hair, confined in a simple knot behind, was drawn in two simple braids, from a forehead pure, ingenuous, and fair.

Her arms and hands were beautifully formed, and their delicacy ill-accorded with her sordid dress. Her figure slender, elastic, erect, spoke of health and activity, and the expression of her countenance was that of truth, simplicity, gentleness, and innocence itself. This pretty child, for very pretty she looked, in spite of the plainness, nay, coarseness of her apparel, was seated upon the side of a wooden bedstead, on which lay a single flock mattress, covering a little straw; and between her soft and dimpled fingers, she was pressing the thin and withered hand of a man, somewhat past the middle age, who lay stretched upon the pallet, evidently suffering from serious illness. The face of the invalid, though grievously emaciated, still retained traces of that manly beauty, for which it had once been remarkable; the hair thinned by many an hour of arduous toil, scantily shaded the well-formed head, but the dark moustache was only slightly tinged with grey. The character of the countenance was such as left not a doubt upon the mind that he, who lay stretched upon that miserable couch, apparently sinking in the last stage of a decline, clasping with his bronzed and

withered hand the soft, white fingers of his little girl, was an old soldier — an invalid. The garret, for it was no better, thus occupied, for it betrayed the extreme of poverty and destitution; the walls were wretchedly bare, covered by no kind of hanging, and unrelieved by the slightest ornament, save one—a species of trophy suspended against the wall, opposite the foot of the bed, and which was composed of a singular assemblage of different materials: two drumsticks, a musket, a cartridge-box, a sabre, a grenadier's cap, a sword, and a pair of epaulettes. It was a history in itself; and told, significantly enough, the tale of the sick man's career, drum-boy, private soldier, grenadier, corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain; the remaining furniture, or rather no furniture, of the room finished the story—an invalid!

The old soldier had been some time awake, but the little girl had but just entered the room, and he still feigning sleep, kept his eyes closed, and remained silent. The little creature continued gently to press his hand, but kept silence, too; though an air of mingled impatience and suppressed exul-

tation animated her pretty features; her eyes were fixed upon the sick man—she seemed anxiously watching till he should awaken.

At length the beams of the sun, now rising from the horizon, burst through the holes of a wretched piece of dark cotton, the apology for a window-curtain; a bright ray fell upon the face of the sick man, he opened his eyes, and met those of his child, fixed earnestly upon him. The large sinewy hand of the father now returned the pressure from the soft fingers of his little girl; and drawing her gently towards him, he kissed the forehead of this his hovering angel; then turning away his eyes, and letting his head drop languidly upon his pillow, he smothered a sigh, and resumed his former attitude.

The girl released her hand, sprang from her seat, and hastily left the room; in an instant she returned, carrying, with some difficulty, a coarse, brownish, red, earthen pitcher, full of a liquor whose savoury steams soon filled the apartment, with the delicious odour, of a warm, nourishing broth; a slice of bread, delicately toasted, was balanced upon the edge of the bowl. As for

tray, napkin, or the superfluity even of plate or spoon, there was none; the dimpled hands of the child alone supported this substantial breakfast, as she placed it before her father upon the bed.

The soldier raised his head at this spectacle, and regarded it with unfeigned astonishment, while she, all crimsoning with impatience and pleasure, cried out,

"Papa, this is for your breakfast, you are not to fast any more; you are to drink no more water. Your friend the surgeon orders you to live well. You are to have good broths, good wine — not too much at once, but a little, little, little, just by degrees, to give you strength; and then three times a day a strengthening draught—such a nice draught! You will never believe that it comes out of the apothecary's shop. Come, dear, dear papa, do begin; it burns my hands; it will do you good; you will soon be able to walk: come, dearest papa, do;—Do take your broth while I pour out your wine; I have got the bottle at the door."

Instead of answering this pressing invitation by beginning his breakfast, the old soldier remained passive; looking first at the pitcher and then at the happy face of his

little girl. Three times his moustache curled as if he were about to speak; three times he essayed in vain; at length—

"Diable! What's this? Just Heavens!"

Then he lifted the pitcher, looked at it as if he doubted his senses, and carrying it to his lips, swallowed its contents with the avidity of one, ravenous through extreme hunger.

And the colour now in a faint glow spread over his pale and emaciated features; while those faint gleams of life and light, which, during the last few days, had only animated his dying countenance, when he turned it upon his little daughter, brightened his dark eye; and a tear slowly rolling down his withered cheek, fell upon the hand of his little girl; who was now busy presenting him with a pewter cup in which she had carefully measured out his due proportion of wine.

Not thin, miserable stuff, such as may be purchased in France for sixteen sous a bottle, but warm, generous fluid; which to the veteran tasted like Château Margault itself.

The cordial spread a genial warmth through the bosom of the sinking man; he raised himself from his pillow, caught his little

daughter in his arms and pressed her to his heart; then sank back, gazing fondly upon her with an expression of peace and comfort in his whole aspect, to which it had long been a stranger.

"But Susanne, my pretty one, how is this? How have you contrived? By what miracle — where have you found it all, my love?"

This was but a simple repast to occasion so much excitement, it may be thought by many who are murmuring thoughtlessly amid all the comforts of life. But this father had been lying on his sick bed for three days, sinking under the sickening exhaustion of absolute want of food; a little cold water had alone moistened his lips—he had lain without complaint; not daring to ask for food; lest he should increase the anguish of his poor child, who he well knew to be without the means of satisfying either her father's hunger or her own.

He was dying of want,—yet had refused with constancy the food which still remained, and which had been earnestly and unceasingly pressed upon him—food that he would have shed his life-blood to taste, so great were the pangs of his necessity; and

yet he had been able to answer with apparent indifference, "No, my dear, I cannot indeed," that the last morsel might be spared for his child.

This is what Gerard—what this soldier had done for three long days.

But now the urgent wants of nature appeased, new anxieties pressed upon him—Susanne had not yet answered his question, she only smiled, blushed, and turned her head away.

"But, Susanne, my dear,"—raising himself: "you had no money."

"None, papa."

"Then you have been to that jew of a usurer—that Arab—that pitiless Crœsus—and he has at last agreed to advance a quarter of my pension at 20 per cent . . . . ."

"I should have tried him again, papa, but he is gone from home."

"Then, my child, our neighbours have had pity upon your tears—upon the extremity of our misery, and have given you credit."

"I dared not even ask it, papa; we know nobody here—nobody in Paris—you come from such a long way off."

"True, too true, my child—except the usurer, who, to do him justice, has saved us

from starving—and the worthy surgeon of our regiment, our excellent Dervieux,—who cut off my leg ;—but alas, Dervieux is almost as ill off as ourselves. I hope it was not Dervieux."

"No, papa—not Mr. Dervieux."

"Then who, in the devil's name, did give you money to buy soup and wine ?"

"Oh, that's not all, papa—look at the bottle," and she shook it before his eyes, smiling innocently in his face. "This is a very expensive medicine, you must know, and you are to take a dose in an hour's time."

"I will take it when you like, Susanne; but, what the d—l?—are my wits manœuvring in a fog? I don't think I have any fever —yet I must be dreaming with my eyes open, as it seems to me. . . . Why, child, you say you have no money, and no credit; and yet you are able to buy provisions and expensive medicines—The deuce! Susanne, but you make out a strange story of it."

Susanne now looked a little frightened, and dropping her eyes timidly, she said—

"Papa, dear papa,—promise me now that you won't be angry,—and I will tell you everything."

"Why, what the d—l, Susanne! am I ever angry? Now thy poor mother is gone, and no one left to spoil thee—Angry! I believe by my soul, I *dare* not be angry with thee—Why, thou art my little colonel. I would rather face ten thousand of those cursed Cossacks, who have cut me all to pieces already, than one tear of thine—poor child. But come—come, kiss me, and then let me hear what thou hast been doing to help thy poor father."

Susanne stooped down and kissed her father tenderly; then composing her attitude, and still sitting upon the side of his bed, she began,

"Papa . . . . . ."

"Well, my darling."

"Papa . . . . . something *very* extraordinary has happened . . . . ."

"'Od, so!—extraordinary!—what do you mean, child?"

"Oh, papa—such an adventure!"

The soldier looked up sharply and anxiously, some old recollection seemed to cross his mind; he seized her hand—his brow contracted—he looked earnestly into her face.

"Well, well—speak out—only speak out."

"Well, papa, then—yesterday, when Mr. Dervieux went away I followed him to the street-door—as, indeed, I always do, to ask how you really are, and so on—and when you will be able to walk, . . . but yesterday I had another reason."

"Well!"

"Papa, I was surprised and uneasy, because for the last two days he had ordered you nothing—I had observed that you sent me away and talked together; and that when I came back, you looked more sorrowful than ever, and that tears were in his eyes—So when he was gone down so far that you could not hear us, I stopped him, and begged him to tell me at once what he thought of you; he spoke so oddly and confusedly, that I was sure there was something — some sorrowful secret—oh, papa! I thought you were going to die, so I cried terribly, and begged him to tell me the whole truth—and then he began to cry too—and at last—must I tell all, papa?"

"Certainly."

"Well then, at last . . . . . oh, papa! he confessed that you had forbidden him to write any prescription before me, till you had some money; for that you could not pay for

it, and you would not break my heart by letting me find that out; and—and—he said: 'It is not his wounds that keep him in bed now, it is another malady.'... Ah, papa, I went almost upon my knees; I knew what he meant—I begged and prayed him to write—to prescribe.—I was resolved, papa, to get you what you wanted.—Then your old friend said, 'My poor little girl, it is of no use for me to prescribe, unless I had a little money to prescribe too; I have prescribed that every day, or you would not, poor little one! have had what is necessary for your father—I have done what I could for an old fellow-soldier. Have we not eaten fire together?—but now, dear little thing, the truth may as well be told at once—I have not a sous left, and he turned his pockets inside out;...He need not have done that, papa. You know what a shabby uniform he wears."

"Ay, poor Dervieux—ay, ay, poor fellow—the Waterloo powder has singed your epaulettes as well as mine! Well, my darling—so what next?"

"Papa, I told a story—I pretended I had a little money that you did not know of. 'Ah! so much the better,' cried he, 'it is the only thing that can save his life. Why

did you never tell us this before, child? You might have spared him some terrible moments.' Luckily, papa, I did not *deserve* that he should say that—but I took care not to let him know it. So, then, he took out pencil and paper, and he wrote what you were to take—and when he had done, I jumped round his neck, and he kissed me almost as kindly as you do—and then I took my shawl and I went out—and—oh, papa!—don't look in that way—don't look angry."

"No—no—only a spasm in the leg I have lost—go on, go on—well, you went out?"

"Yes, papa."

"At what o'clock?"

"Seven o'clock—it was broad daylight—well, papa, I went first to your agent."

"Very well—I thought as much—and he gave you money?"

"No, papa—did I not tell you he was gone from home—his maid-servant was almost as cross to me as he is himself—and she shut the door in my face, because I could not help crying a little."

"Shut the door in your face!—the d—l!—and you a captain's daughter—ah, child! if I had but been there—but, heavens and earth!"

"Now papa—papa—you *are* angry—I can tell you nothing more when you make those great terrible faces."

"Well, well, child, I wont be angry any more."

"Well, papa, I cried more than ever—for I did not know what to do—for we know nobody else in Paris—and so I was coming sorrowfully home—when, turning the corner of the Rue St. Jacques, I looked down a narrow alley—and I saw an old woman surrounded with heaps of old dirty things of all sorts—and she was buying an apron and a collar from a maid-servant, and she gave her three francs, papa—I had stopped a little at the end of the alley, for my heart beat, so I really could not help stopping a little—and so, as soon as the servant got her money, I saw her run and put it into the lottery-office opposite — and I . . . because I felt a little ashamed, I went into the alley—and I took off my shawl—it was much better than the servant's apron and collar—and . . . dear papa, how you do look—don't be angry."

But the child misconstrued the expression of his face—he already understood it all—he gulped down the curses against himself and his helpless condition, which were rising to

his soldier lips. She felt a tear and a kiss at once upon her cheek.

"What, my little love!—what, my treasure!—thou hast sold thy shawl—the last and only covering for thy poverty and thy nakedness—thou oughtest rather to have sold my last garment! What wilt thou do now?"

"Oh, papa!—it is warm weather—and I will go out after dusk—"

"Ah, child!—child!—that tears me in pieces."

"But papa—dear papa—hear it out first—I have not told half yet."

"Ay, ay—go on—but sit there—let me look at you, my darling, while I hear you."

"But first you must have a spoonful of your stuff."

"Ay, ay,—that will strengthen me—Alas! alas! it is time I should gain strength, and come to thy assistance—my poor child!"

She gave him the elixir, and a new vigour was poured into the empty veins of the exhausted soldier. She then went on—

"Papa, I thought I should at least have twenty francs for my shawl, it was so pretty. Oh! dear no!—no such thing...First, the old woman took it up in such a disdainful way—

turned it about—looked at it; then she threw it among a heap of old things as if it were good for nothing at all;—and then she offered me five francs for it, telling me it was more than it was worth; and that its colour—it was such a pretty blue,—papa,—that its colour would bring her into trouble. —I was quite red with surprise, and I stretched out my hand for my shawl; but then I thought again,—and after all I was very glad to have five francs at all events; and so I thanked the old woman, took the money, and went away.

"As soon as I was in the street again, I looked at our friend's prescription—here it is—a strengthening medicine—good broth three times a day, and some Bourdeaux. I calculated that I should get all this for five francs.—First, for the apothecary, I never had anything from him that cost me more than a franc; . . . two pounds of beef, twenty-four sous,—two francs for a bottle of wine. You see, papa, there was enough left for the other little things. I was so happy to think myself so rich; so I ran straight to the apothecary to get the most important matter done first. Now, now, papa, it's coming. . ."

"Well—well—my own?"

"The apothecary's shop was full of people. And as soon as I came in, everybody seemed to stare at me. I felt very uncomfortable, for you know I am so shy,—and then I had no bonnet or shawl on . . . So I should have waited until the shop was empty,—but I was afraid you would be uneasy about me,—so I went up to one of the apprentices, and asked him, in a very low voice, if he would be so very good as to serve me as quickly as he could. 'After madame,' said he, pointing to a little woman as black as a coal, who sat behind the door. I did not pereive her as I came in, because she was behind the door. — Oh, papa! such a queer little woman!—I could not look at anything else; and indeed, I am afraid I could not have helped laughing a little, and that would have been very naughty, you know;—only, I had just been so unhappy about you, that I could not laugh at anything. Well, papa, this little woman was a nun,—and she was *so* little, that it seemed as if she must have tucked up her legs under her gown. Then she had such a long, long nose, as sharp as possible, more like a woodcock's bill than anything I ever saw; and two little eyes as round and as brisk as a mouse's eyes. And then her

mouth was as big as all the rest of her face put together;—yet she looked so merry and good-humoured!...But, really, she was more like a great doll, than a real nun, papa. Well, I could not help looking at this little nun, and I saw she was looking at me. And she seemed to wonder to see me dressed in the way I was. And at last she got up,—that is, I think she got up,—but I cannot be quite sure, for she did not look a bit taller than she was before. However, she said to the apothecary's boy, who would not serve me before her—

"'No, no, sir, serve this young lady first.'

"So, then, you may be sure, papa, I made a low curtsy, and I was going to refuse through civility, but she put her hand upon my shoulder and said—

"'Let it be so, my good child,'—and she smiled so sweetly and so kindly, that it went to my very heart."

"She seemed a very kind lady, indeed, and you were quite right to treat her civilly."

"Oh, papa! that's not all.—Well, the young man in a few minutes brought me the bottle of medicine; and as I had only my five-franc piece in my hand, I gave it to him at once, thinking at least he would give me

back four francs in change. Oh, papa!—he gave me nothing back.—More than that—he kept holding out his hand,—and at last he said there was another franc to pay, and that the physic cost six.—Oh, papa!—six francs!—and I had only five in the whole world!"

"Great heavens, what did you do?"

"Papa, I went so red,—and I felt the tears come into my eyes."

"Poor child—thou should'st have left the bottle."

"And what would have become of you? Oh, no, I would *not* leave the bottle—but I did not know what to do; at last the little woman, who had been looking at me all the while, got up—took the five-franc piece out of the young man's hand, and said: 'The young lady did not know the price of the medicine probably—put it down to my account, sir—I know all about it.'

"The young man turned away, and I held the bottle and the money together, so surprised and confused that I did not know what to do. I dared not go away, but the little nun led me to the door herself, and said, in a low voice, 'Who is the medicine for, mademoiselle?' 'For my father, ma-

dam,' I said: 'I thought as much,' said she; 'but who, and what is your father?' 'An old soldier, madam.' 'Ah, I understand, is wounded.'...'Yes, madam, in the great battle—a musket-ball broke his leg.'—'Ah, heavens! poor child; but your father—has he no family—no friends—no relations? Who takes care of him—who nurses him?' 'I, madam,'—and without thinking, papa, I am afraid I said, 'nobody else.'

"Then the little woman pressed my hand, and she asked me, in a still lower voice, for your address—and you know, papa, it was right to give it, because I owe her six francs; so I answered in a whisper, Pierce Adrien Gerard, *Capitaine des Grenadiers dans la Vieille Garde, rue de Deux Eglises*—the small house near the church of St. Jacques, the second floor. But people began to stare at us—so she said hastily, 'That's enough, my little dear; make haste back to your father, and don't be uneasy about him—I have a little commission near him, which I will execute to-morrow. Go home, my dear, and may God bless you—God *will* bless you; and so she pushed me almost out of the shop, and I had no time even to make her a curtsy, for away she went directly."

"Indeed, dearest papa, I was very glad when I had got my bottle, and my five francs safe to buy all my things; so I ran to get what I wanted, for it was very late: and when I came in you were asleep, and I took care not to awaken you — for sleep always does you good; and so I made my little cookery quietly, and you heard nothing. Oh, now! don't frown, — I slept a little between times — and, oh! this morning I thought you never, never, would awaken, dear papa."

"By Jove! my pretty Susanne—that little woman of yours seems an excellent person; but I own I am a good deal surprised to see a nun taking pity upon a poor soldier. — However, there is, perhaps, something more under all this than we quite understand.—But we will learn about this good little nun at the apothecary's; he must know her, as he gives her credit: we shall easily find out where she lives, and pay her, her six francs again, as soon as our agent—or some other such rogue has been found to advance a quarter of my half-pay . . . for the d — l is in it if I don't get my half-pay."

"Dear papa, you forget, the little nun said she would come and see you to-day.—

Did I not tell you that she said she had a commission to you."

"So you said—but d—l take me if I believe one word of it. You may depend upon it, it is only a pretence to cover her good offices, and save your delicacy, little dear—but we shall see . . . ."

"No commission! yet, papa, she spoke so naturally . . . . ."

"So it seemed to you; . . . but you have not quite my experience, dear child. What commission can a nun have to a poor soldier?"

"Ah, but papa, you are an officer—"

"I am nothing, my child;—I am a poor helpless invalid; but thou art all the world to me. If it will only please God to restore my strength I will work for thee. . , . By heaven, I will shew thee what an old soldier of Wagram—a grenadier of Waterloo can do. These hands will not be ashamed to throw the shuttle, and work at the loom for thee, my darling.—No one can be really despicable but the coward, or the beggar . . . ."

"Somebody rings at the bell, papa—"

"The deuce!—it's very early—smooth the bed a little—take the things off that chair—there, open the door; it can only be Dervieux—"

CHAPTER II.

SHEWING WHO IT WAS THAT RANG AT THE DOOR.

THE reader understands, that the above little scene took place in a small chamber, on the second floor of a house, near the Church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas, Rue des Deux Eglises, at six o'clock in the morning of the 7th of August, in the year of 1815—dark and bloody year for France. It was a scene, alas! not unfrequent in Paris at that period. But probably the reader, as he is now an English reader, does not know where the Rue des Deux Eglises, or the Church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas, is situated—and, therefore, I am going to make him understand as much of the topography of the place as is necessary for his right comprehension of the story.

La Rue des Deux Eglises is to be found—that is, if you take a great deal of pains to find it—in the 12th Arrondissement, 47th Quartier, of the good and large town of Paris;

a little beyond the old garden of the Luxembourg, which limits on that side the 11th Arrondissement, 43rd Quartier—so that the street in question is on the left hand of those who ascend the Rue de l'Enfer towards the Observatoire—and the Rue des Deux Eglises unites the Rue de l'Enfer to that of the Fauxbourg St. Jacques—and has, in fact, the honour to form a part of that fauxbourg itself.

The said street is narrow and long, but it is ventilated upon one side by its neighbourhood to the new plantations of the Luxembourg; and on the other by an open space left vacant in consequence of the demolition of certain convents and churches—whose Gothic piles of dark stone, as some think, obstructed, and as others think, adorned, that quarter of the town; but which the march of intellect has tumbled down and replaced by manufactories—which, if not so ornamental, are, perhaps, full as serviceable as the convents might be:—but the whole place has undergone a fresh metamorphosis since the above events happened in it—and the house occupied by our invalid is no more to be seen.

The houses of this little street were, at

the time in question, narrow, miserable, dark habitations,—palaces, hotels, and handsome houses not being at that moment, exactly the places, in which to seek for invalid officers of the *Vieille Garde* of Napoleon *le Grand.*

As for the Capitaine Gerard, he had, with his daughter Susanne, occupied for some weeks a little, confined lodging in the house which stood next to the Church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas—which house, as we said before, has now disappeared, having been replaced by a garden.

The apartment consisted of two small rooms with bare, unpapered walls. In the largest, or rather in the one somewhat less small than the other—for it was about ten feet square—lay the invalid officer, deprived of one of his lower limbs. In the second, a little longer and proportionably narrower, little Susanne lay on a wretched flock bed, with one single sheet, one miserably small bolster, and neither counterpane nor blankets—but it was, happily, summer, and Susanne was young and healthy. One solitary chair furnished forth each of these cells—the whole of their property, in this way, amounting to two—and in the corner of Susanne's

chamber, near a small window looking into a narrow court, she had arranged, as neatly as she could, the few utensils which composed her *batterie de cuisine*—a few plates, basins, and utensils of common stoneware, black and red—a little stove, and a small chafing-dish to be heated with *braise.* With these poor little Susanne prepared, as neatly and economically as she could, her father's meals; when, indeed, there was any meal to prepare—alas! for the three last days the little stove had remained cold—and poor Susanne's tears had fallen upon those unemployed hands—so actively and cheerfully busy when there was anything to do.

Such was their abode, and such were their possessions. Why they were in such wretched circumstances, and why they lodged in this poor apartment, and in this obscure quarter, is what I shall relate as briefly as is convenient — that is, when the proper time arrives—but at present, it must suffice to say,—that nothing seemed less in keeping, than the fine, military head of the Capitaine Gerard, and the pauper's bed on which he lay, — surrounded by every mark of the extremest want: and that no contrast could be more complete or more touching, than

that between the grace, and beauty, — the delicate features, and gentle and refined expression of his little daughter—the coarse dress which covered her—and the cold, bare, miserable walls, by which she was surrounded.

It was but too plain that some recent event, some great and sudden catastrophe, had changed the condition of these two unfortunate beings; thus left to starve in the very centre of a gay and great metropolis:—and who, surrounded by thousands and thousands rioting in wealth and luxury, were abandoned by all the world; barely continuing to exist, and that in the extremest wretchedness:

> "And homeless, mid ten thousand homes they stood,
> And mid ten thousand tables, pined, and wanted food."

—Alas! they were but two, among the thousands, and thousands of sufferers, by the same events.

But some one is ringing all this time at the bell—Susannne goes to the door—Gerard half rises, expecting to see his friend Dervieux—Susanne comes back, looking a little hurried.

CHAPTER III.

THE NUN.

"PAPA! papa!—I was right, and you were wrong, it is the little black nun."

"Bah! the little nun who lent you six francs?"

"Yes, papa; and she very earnestly desires to see you. Don't make her wait, papa; she is down below."

"Really, Susanne, I confess this is an embarrassing visit—perhaps she is come to ask for her money again .... Well—well, it cannot be helped, we owe her some thanks for the loan at that moment, at least. Pray beg her to come up as civilly as you can, and make my excuses for receiving her on my bed—.... but, stay, Susanne, stay a moment—how ought one to address these reverend ladies? I have not had much dealing with that sort of thing. Must I call her *ma sœur*—or *ma*

mère, ma vénérable, or *ma révérende?* Must I make the sign of the cross when she speaks to me?—the d—l take me, if I know how to treat these worthy recluses."

"Dear papa, I know no better than you do. I suppose one must speak to them as one does to other people—Only dear, dear papa, . . . if you could, . . . if you could, just say, you know—some little something, . . . not quite so often; when you are speaking to her. . . ."

"The devil, but that's true, go, go—I'll take care."

Susanne went down to the nun,—and the good captain prepared himself, as if it were his colonel that he was about to receive;—and while he was arranging his nightcap, and passing his fingers through his dark moustache, he kept thus soliloquising:

"My poor friend Gerard—be on the *qui vive*—thou understandest what it is to encounter a Pandour,—a Croat—a Cossack—a Mamlouk; . . . thou fearest neither sword of Hulan, nor carbine of Chasseur; . . . . but, heavens and earth! thou hast never encountered a reverend sister.—Thou knowest nothing, poor old soldier that thou

art, either of scapular or of Ave Maria; . . . thou hast only heard, that there do exist such things as wolves in sheeps' clothing. Therefore, attention, old fellow!—and if this holy sister be thinking to preach away thy little Susanne, thy treasure, — thy only treasure, — the hope of thy life, thy life itself . . . whose sweet little merry face, proves clearly enough, that she has no vocation for grates and confessionals, I say, by all that 's good — *if*, it be a wolf in sheep's clothing looking after thy little lamb. . . ."

Such was, it must be confessed, the species of prejudice, which had made the good veteran frown not a little, while his pretty Susanne related her adventures; and these were the thoughts, wrong or right, that filled his head as he sat up and prepared himself for a visit from the nun.

There he sat, pale and thin, with a countenance cold and severe; and figure as erect as if he were at drill; expecting this Tartufe, with veil and rosary; whom he, already, pictured to himself, as persuading the little darling of his heart, to the vow, and the melancholy grate.

At last the door opened, and the object of these dire apprehensions appeared.

A very small, lively-eyed woman, scarcely four-feet-four in height, entered the room; and making a little, short, familiar curtsy, as if it had been the hundredth time that she had visited this abode of sickness and misery, she went up straight to the bed, took him by the shoulders, laid him down without ceremony, on his pillow again, and said,

"My good friend, you 'll take cold; the season is warm, and the air soft, but the mornings are always rather fresh;...you have a broken pane in your window, and may get a chill — My dear child, you should have the window mended immediately; the night air is not good for him; but you need not trouble yourself to go out upon that account, I will send my own glazier."

The little nun, while uttering all this, in the most easy, pleasant manner possible, was busied settling to her satisfaction various little matters about the invalid's bed. She raised the cover, tucked it round the sick man's shoulders, smoothed and shook his pillow; performing all these little operations with the address, quietness, and nicety, of the tenderest and most experienced of nurses.

The old officer, almost stupified with surprise, was as passive under her hands as an infant; while Susanne stood stock still; opening wide the largest, and most beautiful eyes, that ever astonished little girl stared with.

The nun, however, seemed not to trouble herself at the astonishment either of father or daughter; but having settled the bed, she took possession of the only chair in the room—and drawing it close to the sick man, she sat down, saying with a smile to Suzanne,

"My dear little woman, you have a pair of good legs, and you are brisk and young, and are not running up and down Paris from four o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night—So my dear little friend, I am sure you will let me take the chair."

"I was going to beg you to do so, madam."

"But do you know, here as I sit,—with my short legs, black stuff dress, and my forty years of age,—where I have already been this morning?—I have been to visit my three blind patients at the hospital of St. Louisa, — my sergeant-major of gens-d'armes from the barracks of Fauxbourg

St. Martin, — and a poor paralytic patient in the Rue du Chemin Vert—perhaps you do not know what a long way that is from this place . . . and I have a vast deal more to do before dinner. I must go and see my prisoners at St. Pélagie, — carry work to the poor women at the Madelonettes, — visit the widows and mothers of my poor soldiers . . .

Ah! my dear mademoiselle, many are the tears that I see shed before I close my eyes at night—but, thanks be to God, and to the generous hearts of some good creatures, I am able to wipe not a few away before I go to rest. Look at my little bag! All here is for my poor—for my sick—that is for my friends. Ah! I am expected in many a place. I am never *de trop*, come when I will..... Well, well, child, give me thy hand! Oh! I know we shall soon be good friends, though there are so many years between us, and though you are as pretty as an angel, and I am like the little hunchback himself . . . Well, well, enough of that—we must attend to the poor gentleman here; come, let us see—what 's the matter? Where are your pains? what are you suffering from? Sorrow or sickness? Sorrow is often worse than

sickness—open your heart to me—tell me all; tell me as if I were your sister . . . I am in the confidence of more than one brave man like yourself, and poor little nun though I be, — I can feel for those who have bled and suffered for their country."

"By all the Cannons of Eylau, Madame! were you ten thousand times more a nun than the Abbess of Mount Carmel herself,—with whom I had the honour of dining in Palestine after the battle of Mont Thabor—I could find in my heart to give you as hearty a squeeze by the hand as if you sported a brave grenadier's cap, instead of that ugly black veil."

And while he uttered this compliment in a loud voice, which a regular *dévote* might have thought not altogether the thing; the captain seized the hand of the little black sister in his immense fist, and pressed it till the good creature could hardly help screaming; but she laughed, and said,

"Oh, my dear Captain! it is very good of you, indeed, to treat me like a comrade; —but do recollect that I am not quite so big as a drum-major."

"I beg your pardon, my very dear sister, —if that is the proper way to call you;—but

what you said resounded in my heart like the last cannon after a victory . . . and I squeezed your hand, as one squeezes the hand of a brother soldier, when the battle is over. But, Susanne, as we do to-day, for a wonder, possess a bottle of Bourdeaux, fetch it, child — give Madame a glass. I own we have but two glasses, Madame, but the child shall drink out of mine . . . *et de par tous les diables*, my dear lady, it will be a droll thing enough to see an old soldier of the Emperor's—pledging a reverend mother to the glory of France—and the health of the *braves* that are left."

"With all my heart, Captain; particularly as I have trudged a good way this morning. But you must put a little water into my glass, my dear, because I never drink wine alone."

Susanne did as her father desired; and while handing the glass to the Captain, she bent down her head and took the opportunity to whisper—

"Don't swear now dear, dear papa—Don't, pray don't."

But she had reason to repent of her advice, for instantly the brave old soldier cried out with a loud voice,

"*Par le corbleu!* Dear child, thou art right;—But *ventre mille cent! bleu* I think, *que le diable s'en mêle*, for you know I swore . . . ."

"Yes, papa—no, papa!—See, Madame is holding out her glass."

"Your good health, my dear, honoured sister; and the d—l—but this wine warms and does me good, and I am obliged to you and to this dear child for it. I know, Madame la Religieuse, that I owe you six francs...and I hope soon to repay you;—but I swear, by the honour of an old French soldier, that to repay what I owe to your goodness and humanity is impossible. . . . You spared my Susanne's feelings at the apothecary's, and you enabled this dear creature, to profit by her last sacrifice.—Ah, Madame! she had sold the last article of decent clothing that she possessed in the world,"—and the tears stood in his eyes as he spoke.

"Had you?" turning quickly to Susanne "then you did well.—I think, however, that I guessed by your little face, what was passing in your heart. . . . God will repay you for your piety to your father; but let me visit your wounds, my good friend—Are they

severe? Are they closed yet? Your daughter spoke of a cannon ball: I have served in the hospital, and I am almost as good as a surgeon."

"Thank you, my good mother, another time: I had been wounded six times by lances, four times in my side, twice in my limbs; but I kept my place nevertheless, and was commanding the regiment to form into a hollow square, with our eagles,—the hope and glory of *la Vieille Garde*, in our centre,—when a cannon ball carried off my right leg and procured me the honour of falling on the field of battle.—And there I thought to remain, with those brave men, *qui meurent et ne se rendent pas;* but when I came to my senses,—for I was stunned at first,—I found I had been carried, with the wounded, to a village: and there the surgeon of the regiment, a clever man, and the best friend I have in the world, cut off my leg in a second, as if it had been a pullet's wing.

My daughter joined me in a few days, and having, happily, a few napoleons still left in my sash, we did very well at first. But my wounds festered—my condition became dangerous—my friend and surgeon was gone

to Paris, so I got myself carried thither, but at my own expense, mind. There, economy soon became the article of the most pressing necessity, so my friend engaged me a lodging, not a very expensive one, as you see. My little girl furnished it in a manner suitable to our resources,—and here she nurses me, like a ministering angel from Heaven, as she is; and here my worthy surgeon attends me, and dresses my wounds. Thank Heaven, and his care, they are at last all closed, and soon I hope to possess a leg, that will never be troubled with the gout.... And such, in a few words, is the history of my last campaign,... and of my last battle," added the Captain, with a short sigh.

The nun shook her head, and Susanne added,

"Papa, you have not told all."

"Peace, child! Madame understands that my pension is not yet granted, and that I have *hopes* only of my half-pay; but the pressure of affairs—the situation of things—the disorder—the... the... the... it will come in time, my child, doubt it not; and in the meanwhile, I am sure Madame will wait...."

"I am very glad, my dear Captain, that

your wounds are attended to, and that you only want strength and a new leg:—and since you have a good surgeon, I will not say anything of myself, though I understand these matters well enough. So now let us talk of business, . . . for you must know, . . . that I interfere with everybody's business, and I have wider resources than you would guess, in spite of my poor little black gown. But as business is not very amusing to little girls, —go my dear, and get some broth ready for your papa, — I think he wants good *potages*, more than phyisc now,—so I shall every now and then just take a look after the affairs of the kitchen. But go away, now, my little dear."

Susanne glanced at her father with an air that seemed to say, "Well, you know what I said," and then with two bounds she was out of the room.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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